DISSENT

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FEBRUARY 1971 $1.25

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To Our Readers

Incomplete returns, as of December 15, show our Fund Drive to have made significant progress but not yet enough to achieve our goal for secure survival through 1971. Pledges and contributions come to approximately *$9,000*, still short of the *$10,000* that is the absolute minimum for survival. Indications are that the number of contributions has increased gratifyingly since the last fund drive; but, for reasons that right now need no explanation, the average size of contributions has gone down—especially among those who in the past reached into three figures.

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BEN SELIGMAN

1912–1970

BEN SELIGMAN was an old-fashioned socialist intellectual. The world is full of "old-fashioned intellectuals" for whom the concept of socialist fraternity has long since lost whatever value it might once have had. And it reverberates to the cries of "socialist intellectuals" who brutalize the notion of brotherhood by limiting it to this elite or that. Not so Ben.

Many of us are tolerably aware of Ben's accomplishments in his chosen field. Determined not to be hampered by a heart that would not beat in rhythm with his high ambitions, he drove himself to produce a stream of books and essays on economic problems. Until the last five years of his life he was not granted the leisure of the academic who does his work in three- and four-day weeks and long summer holidays. Employed full-time at a series of research, administrative, and organizing jobs situated mostly around the labor movement, he had to work nights and weekends, reading hard and writing fast, to commit to paper the insights that grew bolder, sharper, and more pungent as he himself grew older.

What is perhaps less known, although cherished by friends, relatives, and comrades, is his success in maintaining an equipoise between foolish optimism and easy despair, between blind faith in the new generation of radicals and paralysis before the totalitarian abyss. He could have gone whoring after the young, or he could have hectored them for their ignorant abuse of values already abandoned by others of his own generation. In choosing to do neither, he chose to remain an open-minded socialist.

At the same time, he indulged his healthy appetite for good fiddle playing, good fiction, good friends, good food. If it was old-fashioned to fight for his favorite old Budapest recordings in preference to the newfangled Juilliard interpretations, or to haunt the bookshops for expensive old books which he might have borrowed or bought in paperback, so be it.

He was hardly a saintly man—he hated too hard and scorned too fiercely for that, and the thespian aspirations of his adolescence often reasserted themselves in theatrical forms of address. But he could laugh at that and even—rare gift!—mock his own mannerisms. And he was incredibly generous, without any consciousness of how unusual it is to be always thinking of your friends and how you might be helpful. His last boast was not of his own work, published or forthcoming, but of his success in recruiting able people to the university community in which he was functioning with such admirable productivity when he was cut down.

What a good man we have lost!

HARVEY SWADOS

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RICHARD HOFSTADTER

1916–1970

THE DEATH OF RICHARD HOFSTADTER has been felt as a tragic loss, a harsh personal blow, not only by those who had been close to him but by colleagues, students, readers throughout the country. He was a brilliant historian. He wrote English prose with the assurance of a master. His ideas were his own, held with firmness but never fanaticism.

Over the years he honored us several times by allowing DISSENT to print sections of his work before these appeared in his books. And while his political views were at some points different from our own, we knew him as a sympathetic and attentive friend whose criticism was more valuable than the praise of others.

His life shone with the virtues of liberal cordiality, humane considerateness, and vibrant compassion. Everyone who knew him recognized that he was an exemplary man, and found in his distinction, at once so modest and secure, reason for happiness. He was a marvelous friend, sensitive to the needs of his colleagues, the moods of the troubled, the playfulness of animals, the sufferings of children.

One felt his presence as morally luminous, for wherever he was, life seemed better.

IRVING HOWE

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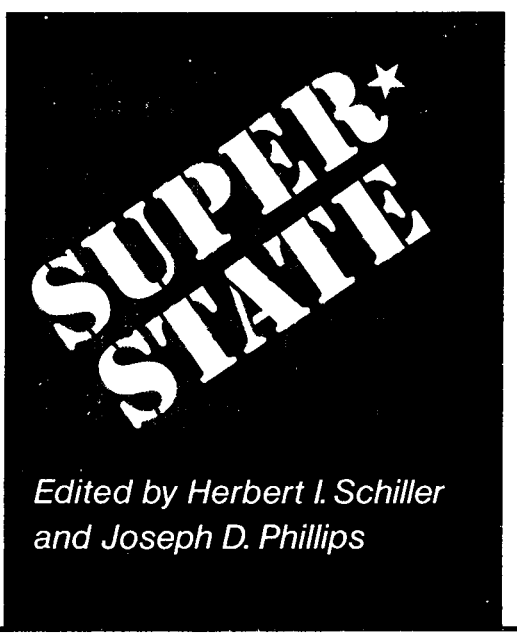

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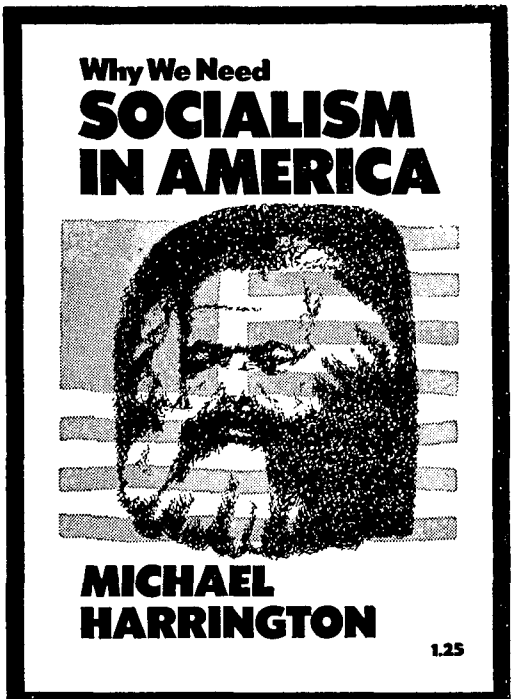

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NEW EDITORS

We are pleased to announce the following additions to our Editorial Board:

JERVIS ANDERSON, a young writer whose work has appeared in previous issues of DISSENT, especially in regard to matters concerning black literature; now at work on a biography of A. Philip Randolph.

CARL GERSHMAN, a young political activist and writer, vice-chairman of the Young Peoples Socialist League, staff member of the Randolph Institute.

MURRAY HAUSKNECHT, a sociologist who has been a Contributing Editor of DISSENT and associated with it since its inception.

ERAZIM KOHÁK, a Czech social democrat now living in this country, teaching philosophy at Boston University, who has written frequently in our pages the last few years.

MARTIN PERETZ, a political activist and writer, especially prominent in the 1968 Eugene McCarthy campaign, and also a member of the social science faculty at Harvard.

It is a further pleasure to announce that the following distinguished writers have agreed to serve as Contributing Editor:

THEODORE DRAPER, the historian of American Communism and a political commentator on a wide range of contemporary topics.

ROBERT HEILBRONER, the economist and social analyst, who teaches in the graduate faculty of the New School for Social Research.

ROBERT LEKACHMAN, the economist and political writer, who teaches at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

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Short Shots

Rise of the Right On the Campus?

A STRANGE QUIET has fallen on the American campus. At least as of mid-December: it may all be different by the time this is read. Whether it is a brooding quiet in preparation for the kind of explosion we had last spring, or a new phase signalling an end, perhaps a beginning of the end, for campus activism, no one quite knows. Reports from various colleges indicate that the organizations of the student New Left are in a poor way, though the sentiments upon which they have been able to draw are probably still there.

Only one organized political tendency seems to be flourishing a little on the campus, and that is the Buckley-style conservative YAF. Anyone who watched election night TV shows must have been struck by the fact that the Buckley headquarters in New York was crowded with young people, far more so than any of the others. How much does that signify? A few hundred kids, Left, Right, or Center, don't make a movement. But people on various campuses tell us that YAF is flourishing a bit, as perhaps the most coherent political group, though it is not yet backed by any sort of mass sentiment.

To move from a period of New Left to a period of New Right on the campus would be an unhappy development, though not entirely a strange one. For the appeals made by both tendencies have something in common: a contempt for the welfare state and the "grubby" material benefits that ordinary people try to gain, a general disdain for the plebes who are seen, from both ends of the political spectrum, as requiring elite guidance. In the earlier phases of the New Left there was, to be fair, a strong moral passion in behalf of such positives as racial equality and peace. But is it clear that by now these are less sullied than is the right wingers' proclaimed devotion to individual liberty?

Perhaps we are looking in the wrong directions. Perhaps it is neither in SDS, what remains of it, nor YAF, whatever may become of it, that the essential campus developments are occurring. Perhaps there is some new, vague, not yet articulated sentiment which can allow the young of the early seventies to fulfill the hopes of the early sixties.

—L. M. ■

A New Soviet Man— Bulgarian Version

ON THE WAY to an international convention at Varna, Bulgaria, my wife and I recently stopped in a small town in Bulgaria. The only decent restaurant being crowded, the waiter directed us to a large table where seven or eight men were already seated. Conversation proved difficult since we speak no Bulgarian and they spoke no other language. One man stayed on after the others had finished, and, through ingenious sign language and a smattering of German, made us understand that he would like to come along in our car. We agreed and so proceeded to drive with him through the rich countryside known as the Rose Valley.

Our passenger explained that he was an agronomist and that he had been in Sofia to inspect some chemicals to be used in agriculture. He was about 45 years of age. After we had been riding for about three hours, he indicated that we should take a side road, because he wanted to show us the village in which he had been raised. We soon arrived in a rich agricultural area. Coming to the house of one of his sisters, we were treated with peasant hospitality. The woman's orchard abounded with lush fruits, grapes, peaches, plums, pears, tomatoes. There must have been at least 100 fruit trees. When we asked her whether this was collective or private property, she made a most contemptuous gesture at the term collective and made it abundantly clear by raising one finger that this was hers, *only* hers. We soon

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left, but not before she had piled some twenty pounds of fruit into our car. We then visited the orchards of another sister, and then a brother. In each case we saw similar riches and were again showered with gifts of fruit. These were all private plots: no one mentioned the collective farms to which they must have belonged.

A few hours later we came to the man's apartment in one of the larger cities. It was a two-room apartment, overstuffed with rather tasteless furniture. Here he lived in rather "petty-bourgeois" fashion with his wife and child. His wife, it turned out, was at his "villa" and so he persuaded us to drive down to the seacoast to see her. The villa was located on a beautiful hillside overlooking the sea and the house itself—one of about a hundred—was a rather primitive temporary structure. But he proudly showed us the architectural plans for the villa he was about to build, a sumptuous eight-room affair with modern bathrooms, terrace, and the like.

Finally his wife arrived. A beautiful lady in a bikini of a rather daring cut. Suddenly it dawned on us that we had just met the prototype of the New Soviet Man. His personal history must have run something like this:

Some twenty years ago a peasant boy, son of well-to-do farmers, decided that he was smarter than others in the village. He went to some agricultural school, joined the Party, and, after a while, was sent to the Big City as an agronomist. The city apartment represented the life style to which he had first aspired. But now he was definitely a man of the New Class, and the villa certified this. The lady he had married was clearly not of peasant origin but the daughter of professionals. This too meant he had arrived. In some twenty years, he had moved from traditional peasant origins to nearly the top of the new class structure. His brothers and sisters were still peasants, though well-to-do, while he, basking in the sun of his Black Sea villa, congratulated himself on the fact that, as a New Soviet Man, he could now partake of all the privileges that fall to those who know how to climb the ladder of mobility in "Socialist" society.

PS: While driving in our car on a Sunday morning with our guest we turned on the car radio. Instead of church services we were treated to their functional equivalent, a beautifully rendered concert of old revolutionary songs, German, Russian, Bulgarian, French, and Italian. Knowing most of these, we began to hum them in unison. Our New Soviet Man was amazed. *He knew none of these songs.* And even if he had known the texts, all this business about solidarity and the like would have made no sense to him whatever. To him, as he proudly explained, socialism meant industrialization and development. This radio program was about as meaningful to our man as a concert of Gregorian church music to a junior executive of General Motors.

Oh yes, when we said goodbye, our man asked us to take a letter to a friend of his in Buffalo, New York, and to post it *here.*

—L. C. ■

A New Switch On Foreign Policy

HAS RICHARD NIXON BEEN CONVERTED by some radicals? Has the Administration been infiltrated by Communists? It sounds unbelievable, but here the President proposes to Congress a radically new foreign aid program, abolishing all bilateral transactions and with it the obnoxious Hickenlooper Amendment and other "strings attached," the vicious tie-ins and other symbols of "aid imperialism."

What has happened? Is American industry no longer interested in the additionality clause? Will Republican senators vote for grants to international institutions without making sure that the money does not benefit some unworthy expropriator of American companies? This is exactly what President Nixon has proposed: to channel all economic aid through multilateral, international institutions.

The unsophisticated may wonder where the gimmick is—and they are right: the Hickenlooper Amendment has been a source of unending embarrassment; Nixon has been unable to use it in the case of Peru, although Velasco has no intention of indemnifying the International Petroleum Corporation; the underdeveloped countries have raised a hue and cry about the

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DISSENT

FEBRUARY 1971

DISSENT is a journal devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy. It seeks to serve as a forum for writers devoted to these ideas and values, while also welcoming a wide variety of other opinions. Each writer speaks for himself; there is no effort made to exact editorial consensus or uniformity.

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additionality clause far beyond its real importance, and our foreign aid program as a whole, which was supposed to cast our image in the mold of generosity, has been bad public relations in recent years.

The biggest "benefit" of the switch, however, is elsewhere: we don't know how to stop development aid once it has been given; we don't even dare to reduce the amount given to any particular country in the second year once we have granted it in the first year; we don't dare to penalize a country by withdrawing our aid. In the future, we shall just refer any caller to the World Bank and wash our hands.

—H. P. ■

Labor and the Elections

THOSE OF US ENGAGED in what is loosely called "the New Politics" have been told for some time that we cannot succeed without the labor movement. And we believe it: there was a conspicuous effort in 1970 by peace candidates, antiwar liberals—and even students—to reach the working class. The general failure of this effort, particularly in the East, where the Jim Buckleys had an easier time courting workers than the Joe Duffeys, raises problems for labor and those who insist on its primacy in any progressive politics.

Of course organized labor is divided into many houses—some of which, such as the UAW, are now against the war, and most of which campaigned effectively for liberal congressmen in 1970. Still the single most powerful leader, George Meany, announced that he might turn to the Republicans because the Democratic party was being taken over by "the New Left" (which must have been news to *them*!). Then, despite endorsements from the AFL–CIO, Eastern liberals lost some important contests because of active opposition from the construction unions and a bloc vote of Irish and Italian workers going to "conservatives" who will surely oppose their economic interests. Also conspicuous was the apparent rigging of the AFL–CIO convention in New York State in behalf of Nelson Rockefeller.

And all too often in 1970 labor spokesmen lent themselves to attempts to link the New Politics with the violence of the New Left and to attacks on "permissiveness" etc., which were clearly designed to split the workers from the middle-class liberals. I wonder what good this does for the real problems workers face? The truth is that advocates of the New Politics—who are many times more numerous than the New Left—are committed to democratic, nonviolent politics. Their immediate object is to end the war and the racism which they see as the fundamental causes of the social conflicts which hit hardest in working-class neighborhoods and the economic inequities which Nixonites and right-wing Democrats try to hide in a fury of flag-waving and antiliberal rhetoric.

The New Politics people believe that in terms of the war, the cities, and the economy, the interests of the middle class and the working class are linked. What is needed now is the kind of leadership that can explain to the workers that their understandable desire for "law and order" can only be fulfilled by a more democratic social structure, not by abusing liberals and students. There is much evidence already —e.g., the Massachusetts and Detroit referenda —that the working class would welcome an immediate disengagement from Vietnam. But not enough of them connect the war with the inadequacies of our politics and government.

Workers in the cities, blacks in the ghettos, liberals in the suburbs, students on the campuses: all are abused and insecure these days—and the conditions of their lives will not improve until they join together to fight the corporations, the military, and other elitist powers which prevent this country from responding to the needs of its people. For as much as the New Politics needs labor, labor needs the New Politics. The only alternative is alliance with the elitists—and even George Meany acknowledged as much when he denounced Nixon's economic policies just before the election.

The point is that economic issues can't be isolated. The needs of the workers will not be met by "conservatives." They will only be met by a politics which understands their sources, and that politics cannot command any power until the "new class" and the working class are led to an identification of their common interests.

J. L. ■

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Irving Howe

America "Uncertain as to Answers"

December 25, 1970

IT'S AS IF the American people (assuming for the moment so large an abstraction) had said:

> *We trust neither party completely, we are nervous and dismayed about the state of the country, we are not inclined, certainly not yet, to venture into extremism at either pole. The economic issue, meaning mostly unemployment, troubles us, and there we lean toward the Democrats. The social issues, meaning law and order and safety on the streets and campus violence, also trouble us, and there we lean a little toward the Republicans. But Spiro Agnew, though some of what he says may appeal to us, isn't our man. Precisely who is, we don't yet know.*

Senator Muskie said something similar when he remarked that the election result was "not a victory for the President, but it is not a defeat either. The results show the country . . . uncertain as to who has the answers or what the answers are."

Nor do the New York results, painful as it is to have a Buckley representing the most liberal state in the union, seriously challenge what Senator Muskie said. Here R. W. Apple, reporting from New York to the *New Statesman* (11/6/70) seems quite right:

> The result in New York will be interpreted as a sign that [it] has turned conservative, but that is nonsense—just as it was nonsense to suggest that Lindsay's victory last year . . . meant that liberalism was still flourishing in New York. The liberals, with their inability to keep people from being beaten on the head night after night on the sidewalks, have alienated their Irish and Italian constituents, and even many of their Jewish ones.

There were of course disappointments, not only in the defeat of certain candidates like Gore, Lowenstein, and Duffey, but in the extent and nature of student participation. The massive "turnout of a generation," expected last spring, simply failed to occur. Why? Perhaps because many candidates did not arouse strong feelings (working up enthusiasm for Arthur Goldberg had to be hard at any age). Perhaps because student activists had allowed themselves to be infected with moods of apocalypse, which by their nature don't lead to the kind of work required in electoral campaigns. And perhaps because students always tend to be volatile and ephemeral in their political responses—and, in the overall structure of American politics, a good deal less important than they or some of their professors suppose.

By contrast, the blacks came out in large numbers. Their vote in Memphis for Gore was a record high; they helped defeat the racist Albert Watson in South Carolina; they increased the number of black representatives in the House, mostly by forming local alliances with unions and white liberals; * and the triumph of the black educator Wilson Riles over Max Rafferty in California seems cause for rejoicing. Once again the bulk of the black voters showed

---

* In some academic-left and black "militant" circles the defeat of Andrew Young, the SCLC leader, in his Congressional campaign in Atlanta was interpreted as evidence that alliances with whites do not pay off. But as Roy Wilkins has cogently argued, the problem in Atlanta was actually a different one. Young lost by some 20,000 votes. In the heavily black Fifth District there are over 70,000 registered black voters. Only 40,000 of them voted. Had the Young campaign managed to get 20,000 out of the 32,000 non-voters to come to the polls, the result of the election would have been different. Why they didn't vote, we can't say at a distance; but this breakdown of the vote hardly demonstrates the futility of making alliances across the color line.

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the good sense to ignore the Bobby Seales and Rap Browns who tell them it makes no difference who gets elected.

The unions also came off rather well, with a higher percentage of COPE-supported candidates winning in 1970 than in 1968. In crucial districts and states, COPE again showed that it runs the most efficient agency in the country for prodding large numbers of voters to go to the polls. And, except in certain sections of New York, there were no large defections of blue-collar workers to the Republicans. Just as the Nixon-Agnew strategy of trying to win the South largely failed, so their effort to break into the blue-collar ranks through the issue of law and order has also failed. At least so far.

Anyone on the Left who wants to maintain a clear distinction between fact, attractive or not, and fantasy, desired or not, must recognize that it is sheer nonsense to keep saying (as it has been fashionable to say in certain left-intellectual circles) that the unions are mere "paper shells" (check with General Motors!); that they no longer have much political muscle, that many of their members are drifting toward Agnewism or worse, and that any serious effort for defeating Nixon in 1972 is possible without the crucial participation of the unions.

II

WHAT does all this mean for the next few years in American politics?

The country oscillates uneasily. A bit to the Right, a bit to the Left, with the main pull in the Center *but the Center itself far from resting at a fixed point.*

One of the best analyses comes from Daniel Yankelovich, the pollster and analyst. According to his polls, there is in New York State a large segment of voters, *approximately 25 percent of those registered,* who "are deeply disturbed about law and order and also believe that Vice President Agnew is hurting the country." These people

> do *not* use law and order as a code word for coming on strong against blacks, Puerto Ricans, poor whites, welfare recipients, and students, but as the expression of a genuine concern.

And let us be honest: it is a genuine concern. Anyone who lives in New York City, especially on the West Side which shelters (if that's the word) many liberals and intellectuals, must know from his own experience that it's a genuine concern. Some intellectuals assume all but automatically that anyone who talks about mugging and violence on the streets is really indulging in racism; but all of them are careful about letting their kids go out on those streets.

Who are these 25 percent of registered voters that Yankelovich is talking about? Almost 60 percent of them are enrolled Democrats, which comes to 11 or 12 percent more than in the population as a whole. Slightly more than one-third of this stratum describe themselves as "liberals," which again is a significantly higher percentage than those—22 percent—so describing themselves in the population of New York as a whole. And 38 percent of this group of voters—that is, of the 25 percent who are both worried about law and order and against Agnew—consider themselves to be "moderates." It is a group of voters that cuts through a cross section of socioeconomic groups; no simple correlations of class are possible.

What we have then is something of potentially great political significance: a large minority of voters who had often supported liberal candidates in the past and might well do so again in the future, but whose concern with law and order may be—indeed, probably is—weakening their traditional ties to the Democratic party and thereby makes them an especially attractive target for a Nixon.

Yankelovich provides some further information about this 25 percent of the registered New York voters. They split their vote about evenly between Rockefeller and Goldberg, and in the senatorial campaign 30 percent of them voted for Ottinger, 37 percent for Goodell, and 21 percent for Buckley. Clearly we are not dealing here with any simplistic version of backlash, but with political possibilities that can be pressed in several directions. Yankelovich writes:

> On the national scene, the most striking implication . . . is that neither party has as yet preempted the real law and order issue. Governor Wallace of Alabama was probably correct in his election statement that he was the first national figure to articulate the law and order issue to the American public. The Republican party then seized upon law and order but continued to stress its Southern conservative origins. The Vice President speaks of drawing the line . . . sweeping the garbage out of American society.
>
> This rhetoric appeals to one part of the Silent Majority—its pro-Agnew faction. Yet,

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> if New York State is at all typical, this group is a minority of the electorate. Most Republican candidates have not preempted the moderate, middle ground. . . .
>
> Liberal Democrats, for the most part, are even less responsive to the feelings of the moderates. Even when they acknowledge the legitimacy of the law and order issue, they are likely to dismiss it with a sentence or two. . . .
>
> Most Republican and Democratic candidates appear to have misinterpreted the law and order issue—and for the same reason. Both see its pro-Agnew face. Both miss the other part of the Silent Majority—the people who have a genuine concern with crime and drugs and violence independently of any feelings they have about students and blacks and the poor. Indeed, blacks are among those who feel most strongly about crime, drugs, and law and order because they are its chief victims. . . .
>
> Emerging as a major national issue is the arousal of a deep political instinct on the part of people to protect their own. . . . It dominates the political sensibilities of millions of people of good will.

What conclusions can we draw? If liberal candidates, following the line of almost all New Left and some New Politics people, identify concern with law and order as a code word for racism, they will help drive this crucial 25 percent of the electorate into the hands of Nixon. They need only turn to Mayor Lindsay for lessons on how to do this. But there is another possibility. The concern with law and order can be recognized as an authentic one, while at the same time demagogic and reactionary proposals for curtailing liberties in the name of fighting crime are steadfastly opposed. That the 25 percent of the electorate we are here discussing is ready to declare itself anti-Agnew suggests that it would respond to such an approach. I think it reasonable to suppose that at least a large portion of this 25 percent recognizes the impossibility of immediately stamping out violence *by any means whatever*—perhaps that is why Reagan's winning margin was cut in half, since, despite his rhetoric, he had been no more successful in coping with this problem than anyone else. But what this 25 percent does seem to want is some serious recognition of its troubles.

A liberal campaign in 1972 which (a) came out for a rapid liquidation of what would then remain of the Vietnam war; (b) placed heavy stress on domestic economic issues, along the lines of greater federal expenditure in behalf of jobs, housing, education, anti-pollution and smaller expenditure on the military; (c) spoke in a language that would connect with the feelings and troubles of mainstream segments of the population, which includes preeminently the 25 percent we have here been focusing upon; and (d) avoided like the plague the effort of Jerry Agnew and Spiro Rubin to plunge this country into a *Kulturkampf* over "permissiveness," drugs, hair, and other middle-class hangups—such a campaign would have a considerable chance of success.

III

THIS ASSUMES that elections matter. It assumes that, in the American context, there is strong and sufficient reason to prefer a liberal, even with his weaknesses, to a conservative, despite his possible strengths. And it further assumes that various notions now being toyed with in academic-left circles—ranging from the lie-back-and-tickle-your-stomach outlook which asks that the country "green" itself to various notions about revolutionary strategy—are at once elitist and irrelevant.

What I am talking about is a recreation of the liberal-labor-black coalition which alone can continue to extend and improve the welfare state. Obviously, as socialists and even some nonsocialists recognize, such a policy cannot solve the fundamental problems of our society. But it can bring, as it has brought, *significant* incremental changes. Nor does advocating or participating in such a politics signify an abandonment of deep-going socialist criticism of the society in which we live; quite the contrary. But if one believes that politics matters, if one wishes to affect the here-and-now of who makes decisions in Washington, there is no other choice.

We will be told that such a policy, even if it resulted in the defeat of Nixon two years from now, is not deeply related to some of the issues now agitating thoughtful people—alienation, military-industrial complex, environment, etc. To some extent, that is true; the limited expectations one can have from a liberal Democratic regime aren't likely to remove such problems from view. But one need only ask: in which kind of political context would it be better to have to face such problems, the context of Nixon-Agnew or that of liberal Democrats who might defeat them?

We will be told that such a policy may not

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engage the emotions of dissident youth; in fact, I was recently told by a good friend, whose devotion to liberal principles is beyond question, that social democratic politics are "boring." We touch here upon a very tangled complex of feelings, and I want to return to them an issue or two hence. But here let me say this: if the dissident youth can't sympathize sufficiently with the plight of millions of ordinary people, men who work in factories and offices and now sometimes find themselves out of work, then something is sadly wrong with dissident youth.

But I don't think that is true. Imaginative liberal candidates like Joseph Duffey have been able to gain the support of large numbers of young people while also winning to their side the bulk of the labor movement; that could be repeated and enlarged. True, such a social democratic proposal may be "boring" to people who do not have to experience the painful effects of Nixon economics, people who have tenure and therefore are freed of the anxiety of survival. Such people, teaching the virtues of imaginative sympathy in their classrooms, might show a little for masses of their fellow citizens by being ready to join with them in behalf of partial solutions and partial strategies.

It is a striking sign of the privileged position in which students, intellectuals, and academics find themselves that they are perhaps the only groups in our society for whom the question of *whether* to be concerned with politics in the ordinary, pragmatic sense is a real one. For just about everyone else, of whatever persuasion, there can be no question that the electoral fight looming in America is highly significant. Intelligent radicals, sensitive radicals, but, above all, humane radicals will do what they can to affect its outcome.

Granted that our society and our culture are in a very bad way; that some of what ails us probably can't be alleviated through politics at all, let alone the relatively modest (though, God knows, sufficiently painful and hazardous) kind of politics suggested here. Granted that we need new visions of human community, new possibilities of personal existence, new styles of work and leisure, new relationships between the sexes. But even as we try to develop all of these, are we to become so calloused to the burning needs of our fellow men that we will simply dismiss as inconsequential their efforts to achieve even "small" or "partial" solutions? And would full employment, an adequate housing program, a guaranteed annual wage be so "small"? How shameful it would be if American intellectuals, in the name of ultimate visions, were to end up with immediate blindness!

Patricia Cayo Sexton

Women Debate the Equal Rights Amendment

December 20, 1970

IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS there has been a vigorous debate among women activists concerning the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, which would void all state and local laws with special provisions on women. The Amendment passed the House, but was crippled in the Senate for the time being. If it gets past the Senate, it must still go through a referendum vote of the state legislatures.

Women in general and women unionists in particular are lined up on both sides on the question of the Amendment. Olga Mader, a vice president of the UAW (and as such, perhaps the leading woman unionist in the country), vigorously supports the Amendment. So do almost all vocal women in industrial unions. On the other side, Myra Wolfgang, a vice president of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers' union, has been among the effective spokesmen against the Amendment.

I am myself among its supporters. But this

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is by no means an unambigious issue, and the opponents of the Amendment have some strong points. They believe: (*a*) that *some* laws are needed to protect women against employer exploitation, and (*b*) that existing federal law and court rulings can, in time, take care of objectionable discrimination, and that therefore the Amendment is superfluous.

Mainly the opponents come from industries of low capitalization (service, retail trades, etc.), where women predominate. In those industries, women are indeed exploited, and are indeed protected by state law from still worse exploitation. In some cases state laws (which vary widely from state to state) protect such women against long involuntary overtime work and against night work. They also guarantee some amenities. Some require that women be seated at their work, and that rest periods and couches for rest be provided. Some forbid women to lift heavy objects (say, 25 pounds or over), or carry them, or climb to any considerable height. All of this sounds good, and it *is* good. In low-wage, nonunionized industries, such laws are about the only protection women have.

But in other and more progressive industries, such laws keep women down. They prevent them from moving into good jobs—semiskilled, skilled, managerial. Women, by law in many cases, can't become in-plant electricians (one of the best jobs) because they can't climb. Often they can't become pipe fitters because they can't lift and carry the pipe, or machine repairmen because they can't lift parts out of machines. Often they can't become crane operators (a simple job) because they can't climb up to the crane, or foremen because they can't work the overtime hours foremen sometimes have to put in. In truth, most of these jobs do *not* require strenuous labor or special masculine prowess for their effective performance. Yet the specifications for the good jobs are usually written in such a way as to legally exclude women.

Many women can perform some of these jobs as well as men. There is probably no skilled or managerial job that women (many, not all) could not learn to do. Most of these jobs involve skill, training, manual dexterity more than muscle, and most are physically easier than many unskilled assembly jobs.

Some women can't perform these jobs, but some men can't either. As in other jobs, selections should, by rights, be based on ability and not on such artificial criteria as race and sex. Men obviously do not welcome the competition of women for these jobs, though many are nobly resigned to it. There is too much competition as it is, and there are now too few jobs. The average unskilled male has nothing to look forward to in the plant, except a crack at a foreman's job or an apprentice program. The blue-collar male feels besieged enough without having women crawling over his head and beating him to the good jobs. Still, women have the same needs and should have the same job rights. Increasingly blue-collar jobs are becoming skilled jobs. In pay, overtime, security, independence, working conditions, these skilled jobs are vastly preferable to unskilled and assembly work. Women want these jobs, for the same reason that blacks want them. They also want supervisory jobs, and again for the same reason.

Women want nonproduction jobs—jobs off the assembly lines—even more than they want skilled jobs. Taking inventory, for example, is easier and freer, than jobs on the line, yet men, under cover of the law, lay claim to a high proportion of these and other nonproduction jobs.

Protective laws also keep women from being hired. Employers would naturally rather hire a man, any man rather than a woman, any woman, even a qualified one, fit and in her prime, yet who cannot lift, carry, work overtime, etc. She is simply a less versatile and useful worker. Getting a job is even more important to women than getting promoted to a better one.

To illustrate the importance of "getting ahead" in the plant, such as it is, one of the most common types of grievance under the General Motors and most other contracts is discrimination in promotional opportunities. Few of the grievances are filed by women, as yet. The law constricts job openings and dampens aspirations. To date, the "protectors" of women's rights have done very little to advance their interests. Perhaps then, some new protectors are needed.

Those who support the Amendment also say that women don't want to be "protected" against overtime. In highly unionized indus-

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tries, this is true. Most workers—men and women—will work as much overtime (at premium pay) as they can, for they need the extra money. Most unionists, however, feel that overtime should be voluntary—rather than compulsory, as it is in most cases—for everyone. Until such time, women workers want to be permitted by law to collect premium pay for extra work. Far more than such "protection" women need day care centers, as Swedish women have, where they can leave children while at work.

II

WHAT ABOUT THE VULNERABLE WOMEN down at the bottom of the job ladder? What happens to them if the Amendment passes? In the long run, the Amendment will help pull these women up by opening vacancies in the better jobs for women. It should help lift the whole status of women to a position parallel to that of men, and it should do this with relative dispatch. Women will then, across the board, be subject to less exploitation. Raising blacks to skilled trades, supervision, college, the professions—incomplete as this upgrading is—has multiplied job openings and helped boost the morale, aspiration, and fighting spirit of the whole race. Just so with women.

Many women, however, work in small and undercapitalized industries that defy organization, and many are still timid about unionization. The lot of these marginal women, almost beyond the reach of unions, could be improved far more by the inclusion of *all* categories of workers in the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act than they are by the present "protective" state laws on women. As it is, many of the "service" jobs in which women work are excluded from such protection as the federal minimum wage.

The debate over "protective" legislation is not a traditional one in which liberals and radicals line up neatly on one side. Even the official policy of the UAW has until recently been to support "protective" laws. Now its position is against them. The last convention resolved to "repudiate certain so-called 'protective' state laws which are used by employers to deny women workers rights and benefits to which they are entitled," and to support laws that protect all workers and make overtime voluntary for all. Not one woman spoke against this position at the convention. This new policy is a major revision of union tradition.

Back in 1841, the factory girls at Lowell and Exeter established their own publications, *The Factory Girl* and *Factory Girl's Album,* to combat company handouts about the joys of work. They told about their 14–16-hour work day, their wage of $1.56 a week, and the fact that many were "forced to abandon their virtue" to live at that wage.

Massachusetts passed a law limiting the working hours of factory women in 1874. The Knights of Labor, the AFL, the Progressive movement, the Women's Trade Union League, the Industrial Department of the YWCA, all supported protective laws. Employers opposed them vigorously. The U.S. Supreme Court at the turn of the century gave a go-ahead in the case of Muller *vs.* Oregon, sustaining the right of that state to enact a ten-hour law for women. By 1917, 41 states had new and improved maximum-hour laws for women, and an avalanche of other "protective" laws were written.

Since then not much has happened. Women got the vote in 1920. The next federal act affecting primarily women came under Kennedy. The "Equal Pay Act," amending the Fair Labor Standards Act, has been pending in Congress for 16 years. Under Kennedy it passed, and the principle of equal pay for equal work performed by women became part of federal law.

Under Johnson, the 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed, with the term "sex" included in Title VII, the Fair Employment Section. "Sex" was also included in Johnson's executive order on nondiscrimination in government contracts.

These federal laws are the real protective laws we have on the books—if only they could be enforced. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency that "enforces" Title VII, has ruled, with court approval, that Title VII supersedes all the state laws on women that do not take account of the capacities and preferences of individuals and that thereby discriminate against women rather than protect them.

The EEOC has been unable to enforce the law, however, because its budget is inadequate and it lacks authority to issue cease-and-desist orders and bring violators to courts. The backlog of cases at EEOC is such that almost two

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years are usually needed to dispose of a case. Its conciliation efforts have failed in more than half the cases where discrimination was found. Moreover, while the Executive Order on Government Contracts including the word "sex" became effective on October 13, 1968, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance has not yet issued guidelines or moved to enforce the order. Because the courts are slow and enforcement is weak, the Constitutional Amendment, which would clearly supersede state laws, is now being sought.

III

THE JOB STATUS OF WOMEN, fostered by law, is clear enough in income data. The median wage of full-time women workers was 64 percent of that of men in 1955. It was only 60 percent of that of men in 1964, and in 1967 only 58 percent. That is not exactly progress. In 1967, the median income of full-time white men was $7,512, of nonwhite men $5,069, of white women $4,394, and of nonwhite women $3,363.

The main reason for the difference is in the jobs themselves. Women are massively overrepresented among low paying clerks, sales and service workers, and just as underrepresented among proprietors, managers, professionals (other than teachers and nurses), and craftsmen. More than 64 percent of the 30 million working women are in low paying and menial jobs—cleaning women, waitresses, sales girls, clerks. While 20 percent of males are craftsmen, only one percent of women are; 14 percent of males are proprietors or managers but only 4 percent of women.

Birch Bayh's new version of the Amendment sounds good and almost identical to the original. He would substitute this language, "Neither the U.S. nor any state shall, on account of sex, deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws" for the earlier version—"equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the U.S. or by any state on account of sex."

Best of all would be language and/or interpretation which would make all current laws applicable to men as well as women. This would remove the discrimination in the law, give men and women an equal break, and provide men with what is (all things equal) desirable protection. Whether or not the Amendment finally passes in this form, the highest priority is for a national campaign to prohibit compulsory overtime and other such abuses, for both men and women.

Even a college degree doesn't bring equality. In 1968, for example, a woman with four years of college earned, typically, about $6,600, while the typical male college graduate earned about $11,795. So many jobs are closed to women that, among women college graduates, 23 percent were working in unskilled or semiskilled jobs in 1968.

Women in the same occupations as men earn much less than they. Median annual earnings of full-time workers in 1968 were:

OCCUPATION	WOMEN	MEN
Scientists	$10,000	$13,200
Professional, technical	6,691	10,151
Proprietors, managers	5,635	10,340
Clerical workers	4,789	7,351
Sales workers	3,461	8,549
Craftsmen	4,625	7,978
Factory workers	3,991	6,738
Service workers	3,332	6,058

Even in teaching, which is traditionally female, only 19 percent of college faculties are women. At the lower levels, teaching is left to women, responsibility to men: 75 percent of elementary school principals were men (1966–67), 96 percent of junior high school principals were men (1964–65), 90 percent of high school principals were men (1963–64).

Women are more vulnerable to unemployment than men—and getting more so each year. In 1960, jobless rates were about the same—5.4 percent for men and 5.9 percent for women. By 1969 joblessness for women was nearly double that of men—4.7 percent compared to 2.8 percent.

The Equal Rights Amendment will apply not just to the factory. It will apply to jobs across the board. The school hierarchy, which tends to promote only men, may be shaken by the Amendment. So will the professions that have been male preserves. So will college faculties and administration where so few women are found. So may the "military-industrial" complex, where women are not even seen at policy levels, let alone heard. DISSENT may have to make room for a woman on its editorial and

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contributing boards, if some aspiring authoress can prove her career is injured by the exclusion.

The Amendment will go even beyond jobs. It will outlaw discrimination of every kind. Clubs, bars, organizations will be unable to keep women out. Laws will change: now prostitutes are prosecuted, but the johns go free; Connecticut and Pennsylvania have had laws requiring women to serve longer prison sentences than men. We may even be able to devise a way to keep men from tittering when the subject of women's rights is raised, but that may be a utopian vision.

Luis Mercier Vega

Chile: An Ambiguous Left Takes Office

December 15, 1970

IN THE OCTOBER 1970 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, there were some 3,540,000 registered voters. About 600,000 abstained. The candidates of the left-wing Popular Union coalition won 1,075,616 votes (36.3 percent); The "national" (rightist) candidate, Jorge Alessandri, 1,036,278 (34.98 percent); and 824,849 voted for Tomic, the Christian Democrat (27.84 percent).

Allende's plurality was based on his lead in the northern provinces (notably Tarapaca, Antofagasta, Atacama) and in several southern provinces (Arauco, Magallanes), together with his clear majority in the province of Concepcion (metallurgy and coal mining); whereas Alessandri carried Santiago and numerous rural areas. Although Tomic carried only one province—Valparaiso—the Christian Democratic vote, province by province, rarely was less than 25 percent.

This distribution of votes testifies to a measure of continuity in the expression of public opinion, despite some campaign tall talk (the rightist candidate described himself as an independent, the leftist cited endorsements from the military, and the Christian Democrat talked revolution). It can also be interpreted from another perspective. Male voters gave an indisputable margin to Allende (almost 632,000 as against less than 480,000 for Alessandri and less than 393,000 for Tomic), whereas women voters favored Alessandri (557,000 as against some 444,000 for Allende and 432,000 for Tomic).

In any case, one can scarcely discuss the election in terms of a landslide. The excessive language Chilean newspapers and magazines indulged in can be attributed to the usual methods of political warfare, but it is harder to understand the excitement, not to say hysteria, of the foreign press in Latin America and even in the U.S. and Europe. Apart from colorful headlines such as "Red Dawn over the Andes," or "A Second Cuba," intended to titillate weary reflexes, C. L. Sulzberger's hair-raising evocation in the *New York Times* of the evil days that can befall Chile betrayed a journalism informed more by the State Department than by first-hand observation.

The Soviet press, to judge by the Spanish-language publications of its various information services, handled its Chilean news with great prudence, not focusing exclusively on Allende, and emphasizing the community of views shared by the Christian Democrats and the Popular Unity coalition on important problems (*Tiempos Nuevos,* Moscow).

The development of events was rapidly to restore the Chilean political scene to its traditional stage style. There was, first of all, Tomic's salute to Allende on the eve of the election, a gesture in keeping with a Chilean parliamentary tradition, but not to the liking of the Christian Democratic party. In fact, Tomic's promise to

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throw the Christian Democratic votes in Congress to the Popular Unity candidate, were the latter to defeat him by a margin of 30,000 votes, was a personal guarantee not endorsed by responsible leaders of the party. At no point did negotiations between Tomic and Allende bear on social economic programs; they were confined to certain guarantees that the Christian Democrats understood they were obtaining with regard to essential freedoms—freedom of the press, of political activities, and of labor organization. A public agreement—made possible when the Communists and the Radical party threw their support to the pact—and the additional constitutional provisions voted by both houses of Congress testified to the general will to preserve a parliamentary framework for the new regime, to set legal limitations on its powers, and to exclude any one-party system.

Allende, on the other hand, refused to sign a special provision that would have limited his presidential prerogatives in the appointment of high-ranking military officers, though orally he promised not to intervene in the normal game of promotions within the various services.

And Jorge Alessandri, shortly before the vote to designate the new President in accordance with the law decreeing that Congress should choose between the two most favored candidates, appealed to the national deputies not to oppose Allende's nomination and to refrain from casting their votes for himself. There was a new *abrazo* between Alessandri, the old ex-President and ex-candidate who harks back to a Chile that is tradition-minded and prudent in matters of change, and Allende, the new President who, victorious after three lost elections, is a symbol of hope for fundamental changes.

The rightist leader was not rallying to Allende's program; Alessandri was calling on the nation to respect formal democracy. His action preceded by only a short time the assassination of General René Schneider, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, who had been a guarantor of the rules of the democratic game. Alessandri, the leader of the Right, concerned over the mischief being hatched by an extremist faction in the nationalist camp, chose that timely moment to reaffirm his confidence in the way of law, condemning violence from the Right and forestalling possible violent reactions from the Left.

The transfer of power, the great presidential cortege, the Te Deum in the cathedral, the public celebrations in the center of Santiago were marked by no new style but, on the contrary, pointed to the continuity of what one might call officialdom's political folklore.

In his farewell address, Eduardo Frei reckoned up the promises fulfilled: agrarian reform, advances in nationalization, creation of new industries, development of education, and the resumption of relations with the nations of Eastern Europe; he also called attention to the two black marks against his administration—unemployment and inflation—and announced his intention of pursuing the political battle, indicating his candidacy in 1976. Allende's statements aimed, in the main, at reassuring opinion at home and abroad of the prudence of his program, the moderation of his plans, and the essentially domestic nature of his policies.

Apparently, then, the election of a Socialist president in Chile in no way ruptures the country's relatively stable history in which changes are imposed by necessities rather than by ideologies. But what lies beyond the parliamentary facade?

Political Parties and Social Classes

CONTRARY TO the generally accepted view, the Chilean political system has been for some decades more flexible and open than its social structures. This is a phenomenon that one of the best Chilean observers—the economist Anibal Pinto—has clearly stated in a series of books and articles. Simply stated, the interests of the privileged social classes have been defended not by the creation of any ad-hoc governmental apparatus but thanks to a continuous adaptation to unsuppressed political pressures and to compromise with parties reflecting interests differing from those of the oligarchy. For a long time, the Radical party functioned as an extremely supple political machine, protecting certain groups of landowners in the south, promoting legislation favorable to numerous categories of white-collar workers and civil servants, and beginning the creation of state-owned industries. One would do well to remember that the presidency of Aguirre Cerda,

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under the aegis of the Popular Front, coincided with the rejection of agrarian reform and the creation of the Corporación de Fomento (CORFO), an official agency stamped with a business mentality that, oddly enough, the Chilean middle class lacked.

Nor is the heterogeneous nature of the Radical party, which today is divided and much diminished in electoral strength, at all unusual. The Socialist party, for example, is a conglomeration in which one finds, pell-mell, worker cells in the labor unions, small municipal organizations in the Santiago suburbs, old electoral strongholds in the north and in the south, and a considerable number of intellectuals split by conflicting allegiances: nostalgia for a European-style democratic socialism, seduction by Castroism, and adaptation to certain aspects of publicly owned enterprises. Election-campaign alliances notwithstanding, the Socialist party's rivalry with the Communists remains constant, nourished on old hatreds, sustained by power struggles within the unions, and spiced by disdain for Stalinist bureaucrats. There is no centralized party machinery to impose discipline, despite several attempts to that end. There is no party tactic acceptable to all elements, unless it be during an election campaign. The history of Chile's Socialist party is replete with adventures and misadventures, exhibiting a constant predilection for the coup de force, from the Hundred Days of Major Marmaduke Grove through the Ibana days.

Only the Communist party possesses a real political machine. It has been well tuned up by some 40 years of perfect submission to the orders of the International and the exigencies of Soviet foreign policy. This is not to say that its machine is entirely effective. While skillful in infiltrating labor unions, the party has never been able to create a powerful labor movement or even to control the existing organizations. Nor has it managed to influence the student movement decisively. Despite all its efforts, it has not taken firm root among the peasants. Its daily paper, *El Siglo,* has a small circulation.

The fact that none of the popular parties—Socialist, Communist, Christian Democratic—presents itself as a workers' party is significant, underlining the fuzziness of class boundaries in Chile and the primary role of the "middle classes" in the political life of that nation.

At the risk of being accused of exaggeration, I will say that the Chilean working class has no voice. The trade union center is manipulated from above by groups associated with the various political parties. Its basis, which is narrow, is composed of unions that act in line with corporate business interests. The clearest example is that of the copper workers whose organization, despite its periodic revolutionary declarations, functions pretty much like a North American union. In the large majority of enterprises, the industrial union is dependent on management.

One of the most serious charges that can be levelled against the Christian Democrats is their failure while in power to dismantle the structure of laws and decrees that keep the working class straitjacketed in a highly politicized trade-union system that, for all practical purposes, is powerless except as an electoral sounding board.

A birth or rebirth of an authentic labor movement would undoubtedly have created many headaches for a narrowly legalistic government,

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but it would also have meant the creation of a strong pressure group with social drive. This "tactical error" on the part of the Christian Democrats, who were content to play the parliamentary game, is basically compatible with a class attitude masquerading as "community" spirit.

Such has not been the case with the creation of numerous peasant organizations which mark the birth of self-awareness and the entry, for the first time, into national life of an important segment of the population. Most of these initiatives were taken by government agencies set up under Frei to put the agrarian reform into effect. But this does not gainsay the fact that the irruption of the small landowners and the agrarian proletariat into a society that is in a process of change constitutes a major and irreversible development.

In the absence of an autonomous worker movement and bearing in mind that the peasantry is still in an initial phase of self-awareness, without a well-defined status, and if one is also mindful that large unassimilated masses camp on the outskirts of Santiago, eager to enter society by whatever means but having neither steady jobs nor any expectation of employment, one can venture the opinion that, whatever their demands and pressures, these are not the groups that will determine the policy of the Allende regime. It will rather be the leadership of the various recently allied parties now striving to evolve a program that can respond to the pressing needs of an ill-balanced society and that can reform old, and create new, social structures. In composition these leadership groups are lower-middle or middle class; rhetoric aside, they reflect the interests and aspirations of social strata that, by virtue of profession or income more than property ownership, are already favored by comparison to the poorer elements.

For workers and peasants, the prospect of a redistribution of the national wealth does not present itself in the form of active participation in making basic decisions—for example, sharing in some form of industrial democracy. For them, the question is posed in a more direct and immediate way.

The National Planning Agency (Oficina de Planificación Nacional) writes in its "Economic and Social Development in Chile, 1970–80," that

> The estimates of national income indicate that . . . for the whole economy in 1968, employed workers who constitute 45 percent of the nation's labor force received only 21 percent of the national income; that of that income, 32 percent was absorbed by white-collar employees who represent 24 percent of the labor force, and that the remainder, which is to say 31 percent of the population of working age—self-employed persons, employers, and those of independent means—received almost 50 percent of the national income. With respect to this last group, the distribution of wealth would also be very unequal given the fact that, according to available data, employers and those of independent means who represent 5 percent of the work force received not less than 25 percent of the national income.

It is understandable then that, while opinion among the Christian Democrats as well as in the Popular Unity coalition favors the pruning of unproductive yet costly branches from the national tree and reducing the drain on public resources which is created by remnants of the old oligarchy, this intent vanishes when it becomes a question of deciding which social group will assume the management role and which needs will be assigned priority. Thus, from the very first discussions within the new government, which was formed after bitter bargaining among the various coalition parties, sharp differences arose between the economist Pedro Vuskovic, who championed salary increases favoring the poorest social categories, and various ministers who were thinking only in terms of a general wage increase, which in effect would maintain and enlarge the disparity in incomes.

The Outlook for the New Regime

SALVADOR ALLENDE'S PRESIDENCY has, then, begun in an atmosphere that favors experimentation so long as it extends and deepens the reformist policy of Eduardo Frei. It is unlikely that the Christian Democratic party will systematically oppose Allende's programs provided they follow constitutional channels. Pedro Vuskovic's economic program is more clear-cut, authoritarian, and rapid than the Christian Democrats' but finally not radically different.

The President, in carrying out his policies, will have at his disposal only his presidential

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powers and prerogatives. He cannot count on a Socialist party machine, though he will have to take into account that of the Communist party.

In international terms, it does not seem that the United States will forcibly oppose nationalizations affecting the interests of American firms but rather will follow the policy already in effect in Peru and Bolivia—a grudging retreat. American firms will undoubtedly be replaced by multinational investment groups whose capital funds are deodorized and innocent of national ties, and who favor sale-credit arrangements for industries and projects that, by the terms of the contracts, become the property of the client-country.

What, then, are the possible sources of conflict and tension for the Allende regime?

First, the discrepancy between the prodigal promises made in the course of the election campaign and the government's immediately available financial resources. People in working-class neighborhoods and in the shantytowns are looking for immediate action and results. Too great a disappointment would lead to strikes and demonstrations, which neither the unions nor the Communists could easily snuff out and which would strengthen the hand of revolutionary elements within the Socialist party and the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement).

Another threat of crisis can arise from within the government itself, composed as it is of disparate political tendencies. A combination of election debts owed to various party supporters or congressional electors does add up not to an economic program but to the opposite. Clashes between "politicians" and "technicians" are likely, and the question is whether the President will have the authority necessary to impose a settlement.

Measures such as free milk distribution to schoolchildren can have an emotional and practical significance which is on a very different level from that of nationalizing banks, manipulating credit, or controlling foreign capital. There is, furthermore, the eventual problem of a lack of technically trained personnel, which will hinder the government's undertaking certain public projects and services.

What is more, several of the parties that belong to the coalition government are suffering from internal crises. This is the case with MAPU (a split-off from the Christian Democrats), in which the Jacques Chonchol faction has been reduced to a minority status by the partisans of revolutionary methods. And the not inconsiderable influence of the revolutionary extreme Left within the Socialist party makes that party an unstable partner in the administration.

Also to be taken into account is the agressive nature of the Communists' infiltration into the new government, and their greed for key posts in which they can place the faithful (already a CP member is Undersecretary of the Interior).

Finally, in the event that the tortuous negotiations between Washington and Moscow were to require some further gestures of offensive power by either side, Chile could become a hot spot in the conflict. The Chilean CP might then adopt an extremist role in order to compensate for the Soviet Union's inability to intervene directly.

On the other hand, President Allende is supported by a movement for change, which the nation as a whole feels to be necessary. He can count on an element within the Christian Democratic party which is attracted by the possibilities of collaboration. He has many supporters and useful contacts that have been sustained over the years through Masonic connections. And he knows that in case of need, in order for him to carry out the presidential mandate for which he fought for 20 years, the nationalists, like the Christian Democrats, are prepared to give him a slim majority.

One has only to read *El Mercurio,* the daily of the powerful Edwards clan, to realize the remarkable capacity of the great Chilean families to adapt to realities. Shortly before the election, the columns of *El Mercurio* talked of nothing but Marxist terror and, more seriously still, of a plan to expropriate the paper. More recently, the name of Allende has been presented in its pages as that of a guarantor of the sound functioning of constitutional freedoms.

—*Translated by* ADRIENNE FOULKE

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Jervis Anderson

The Agonies of Black Militancy

ALTHOUGH BLACK MILITANCY has been one of the veins of American radicalism at least since the abolitionists, it was only during the early sixties that most people started paying much attention to it or even calling it by that name. More people seem to have been militant in the early sixties than ever before. If that is so, however, it suggests something quite important about that stage of the sixties: that it encouraged more hopes of a breakthrough into freedom, and thus stirred more black activism, than any previous period in the century.

When people started speaking of black militancy, they were not naming the tradition of black militant activity itself, but a mode of activism that seemed to be distinctly part of the style and personality of the sixties. And they were referring to black militancy not in the sense of black nationalism but in the sense of a movement whose controlling impulse was to break down barriers that stood in the way of a full and equal participation in American society, barriers that began to seem quite vulnerable at the turn of the decade. However, the style and personality of the sixties turned out to be more perishable than most of us could have foreseen. And part of what perished as well was that spirit we had come to identify as black militancy. The term is still used, to be sure—however quaint a throwback it may sound, however it may have the forced and somewhat square ring of language no longer quite in fashion. People who still use the term are mostly those who think that nothing much has changed, or those who find it the most convenient catchall for whatever goes on in the precincts of black radicalism.

WHATEVER HAPPENED to the black militancy of the sixties, or the mood that sustained it, is precisely what became of the sixties themselves. Though not everybody sees it that way, the sixties do not seem now to have been the best time to inaugurate new things —except, as it turned out, buildings and highways in memory of dead men and murdered hopes. To a large number of people, and mainly the young, the decade seems now to be littered with the ruins of great expectations: many of its more decent commitments dismantled; its moral language largely discarded; its political sensibility held in contempt; its outlook upon the world withdrawn; its racial promises revoked or betrayed; its moral sense driven up against the wall. Some who do not regard it that way, but mourn it nonetheless, see it as a half-finished house on a deserted road: not a nail has been driven in since the bank cancelled its notes; shrubbery has grown up all around it; and vines are climbing over the raw masonry and unpainted woodwork. Some of those who had hoped to find a home in the house have lost faith in banks. Some of them, black militants of the sixties, seem to recall that this sort of thing happened to their forebears several times before. What sense therefore in continuing to believe in promises or in retaining their ties to American idealism?

Anyone who has been raised to respond hysterically to anything with the word black in it—or to find no consoling distinctions between one form of black radicalism and another—may be astonished to hear black militancy associated with the public idealism of the sixties. But such a person should try to remember who were the militants then,

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what forms their activism took, and what spirit sustained them. They were mostly young people and mostly students. They belonged predominantly to SNCC and CORE, almost the only groups that offered black and white American youth an opportunity to participate constructively in the passions of their time and help set right a society that had long been out of joint. And the tactics they used were sit-ins, freedom rides, disruption of facilities, and a generality of activity described as nonviolent direct action. However irritating most of this may have been to the country, it was somewhat within the American grain. It was certainly what the country seemed to ask of young people then: that they work for change and express their militant energies within the framework of American values. Much of what the young people did then seems rather tame today. But at the time it caused many of their elders in the freedom movement to tear their hair: it was "too provocative" and it could possibly be "counterproductive."

As to the mood that sustained the activism, it was one of optimism—belief that the country was ready and able to respond favorably to demands pressed upon it within the spirit of its own professed ethics. Then came the years between 1963 and 1968 when that belief was shattered by a series of bullets, and the country has not been quite the same since.

Considering whom the bullets struck, they appear to have been aimed directly at the aspirations of the young, the black, and the poor. In any event, most blacks had only one way of seeing it: once again white racism had cast its veto over social and racial progress in America. It does not seem now to be any accident that it was between those years, '63 and '68, that American cities started going up in flames; that young middle-class whites started embracing what have been called un-American heroes and un-American ideologies; that blacks began entertaining—at least expressing—an interest in guns and black power; that the Vietnam war was escalated into a metaphor of contemporary brutality; that this war drove at least half of America out of its skull; that the escape from reality found its most comforting haven in drugs; that almost an entire generation of young people turned to the politics of self-indulgence, self-righteousness, irrationality, violence, and despair.

Today, if there are young blacks who still consider themselves militants, a look at whatever they are "into" will reveal that they are considerably less militant than people who consider themselves something else—people who say that what they are "into" now are things like revolution, liberation, self-determination.

Out of this, where alienated blacks are concerned, two predominant tendencies have taken shape. The first is marked by a set of attitudes which, shared by a variety of individuals and groups, is defined roughly as "nation-building" or cultural nationalism. And the second, a set of political attitudes—rougly described as revolutionary nationalism—is represented most spectacularly by the Panthers.

WHILE IT IS NOT the first time that frustration has forced a large number of blacks to withdraw into themselves—and while the black nationalist movement of the twenties was larger than anything that exists today—this is the first time that the withdrawal has appeared so calculated and considered. One cannot recall a time when so many among the educated black young and the lumpen intelligentsia of the streets appeared so utterly at odds with the idea of America, when there appeared to be such a deep and conscious spirit of disaffiliation with the things and processes of the general culture.

Whether it be the movement to salvage and revaluate black history, build up black studies, or talk up the black experience; whether it be the search by young writers and literary intellectuals for a "black aesthetic," different in method, sensibility, spirit,

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and values from the "white Western aesthetic"; whether it be the claim that black culture is a distinct, independent, and viable element within American society—whether it be any of these, there now seems more intellectual energy and seriousness than ever in the bid to reconsider the blacks' relationship to the society, to define the grounds for dissociating from the culture, and to create "new black men."

Stated simply, perhaps too simply, the black cultural tendency holds a greater feeling for its connection to African cultural forms and roots than for its development within the community of white history and values. Whether such a feeling may have developed in any case—even if blacks had long been accorded what they conceived to be their rightful status in the society—it is hard to say, though it may be worth speculating upon. What seems clear is that the feeling has come about in direct response to a long history of denial in American society.

Much or all of this, however, is in conflict with the ideology of cultural integration held by a more traditional school of black literary and cultural intellectuals. These intellectuals do not so much advocate cultural integration—though the advocacy is clearly implied—as they assert it to be a fact: that there is neither a black nor a white American culture but that the one has been irrevocably shaped and influenced by the other. There are no more articulate and formidable proponents of this point of view than Ralph Ellison and Albert Murray, both of whom operate out of a deep sense of the inescapable interconnections of black and white American life. To them the term black American or Negro American is not merely a convenient political combination, but a fine fusion of culture and consciousness and historical experience.

Ellison's ideas, stated and restated in much of his writings, were recently quoted in part by James Alan McPherson in an article, signed by both men, in the *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1970):

> I think that too many of our assertions continue to be in response to whites. I think that we're polarized by the very fact that we keep talking about "black awareness" when we really should be talking about black American awareness, an awareness of where we fit into the total American scheme, where our influence is. I tell white kids that instead of talking about black men in white society, they should ask themselves how black *they* are because black men have been influencing the values of the society and the art forms of the society. How many of their parents fell in love listening to Nat King Cole? We did not develop as a people in isolation. We developed within a context of white people. Yes, we have a special awareness because our experience has, in certain ways, been uniquely different from that of white people; but it was not absolutely different. . . . I think . . . that we've looked at our relationship to American literature in a negative way. That is, we've looked at it in terms of our trying to break into it. Well, damn it, *that literature is built off our folklore* to a large extent! I ain't conceding that to *nobody!*

In his book *The Omni-Americans* Albert Murray writes:

> White Anglo-Saxon Protestants do in fact dominate the power mechanisms of the United States. Nevertheless no American whose involvement with the question of identity goes beyond the sterile category of race can afford to overlook another fact that is no less essential to his fundamental sense of nationality no matter how much white folklore is concocted to obscure it: Identity is best defined in terms of culture, and the culture of the nation over which the white Anglo-Saxon power elite exercises such exclusive political, economic, and social control is not all white by any measurement ever devised. American culture, even in its most rigidly segregated precincts, is incontestably mulatto. Indeed for all their traditional antagonisms and obvious differences the so-called black and so-called white people in the United States resemble nobody else in the world so much as they resemble each other. And what is more, even their most

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> extreme and violent polarities represent nothing so much as the natural history of pluralism in an open society.

In pointing out these interconnections within black and white culture Ellison and Murray are absolutely right, of course. That certainly seems to be the cultural reality of the United States. But it is not so much the reality itself which troubles those young people who now want to consider themselves cultural nationalists as it is their experience at the hands of the reality. It may be one thing for them to see that American culture is indeed a composite to which blacks have contributed some of the most vital elements. It is quite another thing for them to realize that those who dominate the cultural composite take no more serious and consequential a view of the blacks' part in it than a white household takes of the traditional black help, or a white audience of black entertainment. What most marks the response of whites in such situations is an enjoyment that rests upon a certain fundamental contempt for those who provide it. The general view of such help or such entertainment is that it is after all what blacks do best, almost the only thing they do well, and of considerably less consequence than the role of whites in the life of the culture. As John Corry put it in a recent article in *Harper's,* "One way or another, white America will try to turn blacks into song and dance men."

Not all blacks will oblige. Were they to oblige, it would be almost like saying that one way or another blacks will acquiesce in America's efforts to keep them second-class citizens. That, of course, is not true. And the same smoldering resentment most blacks feel against the effort to keep them second-class citizens marks their refusal to be considered no more than the song-and-dance men of American culture. Not everybody will want to go in the direction of the cultural nationalists; but the effort they make to cut themselves off from the general culture, withdraw into a cultural community of their own, and cultivate the African strains in their historical background, all of this may represent *their* refusal to be seen merely as the song-and-dance men of the culture.

THIS FEELING OF TENSION with the majority elements in the culture is connected not only with periods in the past but also with a tradition of skepticism quite as respectable as the intellectual tradition that supports the idea of cultural integration. As early as the turn of the century, W. E. B. DuBois was expressing the painful contradictions of the black American cultural situation in these words:

> He [the American Negro] would not Africanize America for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both Negro and American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed in his face.

And almost two decades later, during the Harlem Renaissance, Alain Locke noticed a cultural reaction similar if not identical to that of today:

> This deep feeling of race is at present the mainspring of Negro life. It seems to be the outcome of the reaction to proscription and prejudice; an attempt, fairly successful on the whole, to convert a defensive into an offensive position, a handicap into an incentive.

While neither of these reactions implies or advocates cultural separation, they have a good deal in common with the reaction of those who today are in effect crying out as DuBois did against the agony of being an integral part of a culture that nevertheless spits in one's face and declares one not yet worthy of being taken seriously.

Why, anyway, is it blacks who are constantly being reminded that American culture is a composite? Are there not others who appear to be in greater need of the reminder?

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Why is it that most whites are able to get away with forgetting it? Why is it that remembering it does not seem to make much difference in black's experience? Why—since American culture is so "patently and irrevocably composite"—have the experiences and contributions of blacks been ignored, distorted, or otherwise treated so shabbily in American history books? Why has it been left to blacks to salvage much of their past and their pride from the cutting-room floors of white historians? The answer may well have something to do with power, particularly with those who have it: the power of the majority culture to see as it pleases; to define and impose standards; to promote values and pass judgment; to determine what is of consequence and what is not. Whites "do in fact dominate the power mechanisms of the United States," Murray says. They certainly do. And those mechanisms include culture, which in turn includes the power to dominate and influence the shape of a minority's sense of itself.

The point of all this is not that cultural nationalists are justified in their attempt to withdraw into a cultural enclave of their own or that this is even possible in America. One cannot by sheer fiat or a simple act of will undo the complexities and continuities which have been in process since blacks were transported into the Western experience. The point is, though, that there has been a good deal of anguish felt and a good deal of contempt suffered by blacks while trapped in the cultural crucible of these centuries. The point too is that they are entitled to bawl, and deserve to have some attention paid to the cause and nature of their pain.

"There is also," Ellison writes, "an American tradition which teaches one to deflect racial provocation and to master and contain pain." That may be true—though God knows it is hardly a tradition one would choose if he had anything to say about it. But what one knows as well is that experience also teaches us that pain cannot or should not be contained forever, and that a continual deflection of racial provocation may well be achieved at the cost of some awareness of and regard for who and what one is. One can well understand how deep-seated in the white American imagination is the image of silent and noble black endurance—in fact we know this because it is one of the perceptions forced upon us by the power of the majority culture. But it is simply another fantasy built upon wishfulness and contempt. And, even more important, it is a fantasy that has done its part, a very large part, in helping to maintain the status of race relations in this country and the contradictions in the social and political experience of blacks and whites.

It's time we all stopped believing it. It's time we all realized that humanity may consist more in giving utterance to one's suffering than in containing it, resisting racial provocation than in deflecting it, raging against an unjust status than in accepting it.

If it turns out—and as it appears—that no viable rearrangements are possible within the present reality of American culture, the function of intellectual leadership may well be to speak compassionately to that condition, to provide the rationales by which blacks may confront the stubborn irony of it and make some tragic peace with it.

THERE IS HARDLY ANYTHING to be said about the Panthers that hasn't already been said or that everybody doesn't already know. Whatever insufficiencies the Panthers have been victimized by, they do not include an insufficiency of publicity. Almost everyone has heard about their founding in Oakland; of their claims to be the vanguard of an armed black revolution; their breakfast programs and shoot-outs with the police; their alleged connections with international Communist conspiracies; their trials in and out of court; the fascination they hold for rich ladies in pants suits; and their cerebration by the intellectuals of chic, machismo, and cultural fashion. Much of what describes

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the reaction of the cultural nationalists may be applied politically to the Panthers. Only one aspect of this resemblance will be considered here.

As the latest stage in the continuum of black radicalism, the Panthers are as much in reaction against the society's continued frustration of black hopes as against the failure of the civil-rights protest movement to fulfill these hopes. This is of course a hard position to take against the protest movement, since the power of that movement is simply to persuade and not to act. It is also a position that ignores the solid accomplishments of the protest movement in the early sixties, accomplishments that dramatically widened the frontiers of black freedom. To be a part of the radical spirit of today, however, is to share in the ideology of instant gratification and to hold a contempt for strategies and tactics that may achieve gratification a twinkling later.

Thus—although almost every bit of racial progress this century has been achieved by the civil-rights movement—it is now held to have temporized and compromised too much, to have wasted its time fighting for integration, to have bitten its tongue in the presence of the white establishment, to have asked for what it could get rather than demand what it was entitled to, to have sold out on black manhood. Thus too it has come to appear that one of the principal issues around which the Panthers are in motion is the issue of black manhood. An inordinate amount of their rhetoric seems aimed at expressing the essential quality of black manhood which has been denied—a certain mixture of bravery and arrogance. Bravery and arrogance express themselves in a kind of existential revolutionary theater: living dangerously, threatening destruction, cultivating extreme experiences, risking themselves in extreme situations. Since the slave rebels, only a handful of black men have felt the call to live this way—politically. Cleaver: "We shall have our manhood or the earth shall be leveled in our attempts to gain it." Or as someone less prominent said more recently, the only thing young blacks are prepared for in this country is to destroy it.

The last time that black radicalism was so strident in tone—though more intelligent, more thoughtful, and less sanguinary—was in the years between World War I and the middle twenties when the black economic radicals led by A. Philip Randolph attacked American society and the traditional black leadership with a racial militancy and an ideological vehemence that probably still has not been surpassed. And perhaps it was way back there that the possibilities for rational radical action among blacks began to be exhausted, because the black radical movement of the twenties turned out to be pretty much a spectacular failure. If this is so, then, perhaps the country only has itself to blame that the only possibility for the continuation of black radicalism today lies in the areas of irrationality and violence, or—as Joseph Conrad said in a book that has some relevance to our present political experience—madness and despair. Victories in these areas are measured in martyrdom, in suicide, and in how much of the society a rebel takes with him at the moment of his destruction.

As the seventies grow older, this could even get worse. Who's to say what attractions young and embittered black soldiers returning from Vietnam may find in the Panther movement? How many young exconvicts may be inspired and emboldened by the revolutionary examples of Cleaver and George Thomas? Urban guerrilla warfare led by Panthers, the young black lumpen proletariat, embittered exsoldiers and exconvicts may

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be a nightmare from which it could take a long time to recover—and which many, of course, *many of us* may not survive.

Finally, as periods of black politics have followed periods of intense radical or protest activity, so may the Panther period, as it has been christened by admirers, give way to renewed political activity among many young blacks. Not immediately, of course, for the memory of the more recent frustrations are still too fresh in our minds. The majority of the black population itself represents no more encouragement to the prospect of a revolutionary radical future than America itself does. "The Negro mind," wrote Alain Locke in 1925, "reaches out as yet to nothing but American wants, American ideas."

Ironically, the opportunities for political involvement to which a large number of young blacks may yet turn in the seventies were created by the efforts of the much maligned civil-rights movement. The increase in registered voters, the training of young people as political organizers, the striking down of many of the legal obstacles blocking the way to an open society, the continued if incomplete integration and democratization of the trade-union movement, the election of black candidates to political offices across the nation—all of these have been enabled by the limited but genuine accomplishments of the civil-rights movement. They have also created more space in which blacks can maneuver themselves to the levers of American power. One only has to look at LeRoi Jones's political activities in Newark and his new proximity to the levers of power in that city to realize the uses that may increasingly be made of conventional political avenues to power.

One last word, though, about the Panthers. Even those who believe that blacks can at best share equally and democratically in American power, rather than seizing it, are in no position to carp too cheaply at the Panthers. They are paying an enormous human cost in madness and despair. But madness and despair were not embraced voluntarily; they are precisely where the American experience has driven youthful idealism and activism for the foreseeable future. People like the Panthers are witnessing to the madness that all blacks have felt at one time or another—and to the despair that many of us have avoided only by dint of some tragic and incredibly hopeful conception of the world and of our experience.

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Erazim V. Kohák

Being Young in a Postindustrial Society

WHATEVER IS HAPPENING ON CAMPUS, it is not a revolution in any recognizable sense. A revolution must have an independent socioeconomic base, and the "youth revolution" conspicuously lacks that. Its proponents do not constitute a class, definable in terms of a specific mode of production and capable of offering an alternative mode of meeting men's physical and social needs. Nor do the young have a set of structural proposals that they could put into effect if they were to seize power—or, for that matter, an organization capable of seizing it. The campus upheavals have created a violent, destructive fringe, but the campus mood as a whole is not that. It is a mood of concern and acute alienation, and the upheaval in which it results, while capable of affecting national policy and causing temporary disruption of academic processes, can be represented as a "revolution" only rhetorically, either to justify or provoke repressive measures. For purposes of social analysis it might be more accurate to describe it as a sort of *mutiny*—a bewildered, explosive refusal to continue functioning within a system that has become increasingly alien and alienating.

For this reason, social conditions that shaped the campus upheavals might well prove more significant than the immediate causes sparking this or that explosion. Those causes are real, urgent—and familiar enough. American foreign and domestic policies are passing through a fundamental crisis. It is not simply a matter of specific setbacks like the Bay of Pigs fiasco or the bloody stalemate in Vietnam, or the discovery of poverty and discrimination at home. Rather, basic conceptions which have guided American public policy since the thirties have proved inadequate in the complex world of the sixties. As at the time of the analogous failure of isolationism and *laissez-faire* in the early thirties, America is reexamining its basic commitment, foreign and domestic, and the young serve as the leading edge of frustration.

But while there are clear parallels between the failure of isolationism and *laissez-faire* in the thirties and the present failure of anti-Communism and Keynesianism, there are basic differences as well, and these need to be explained in terms of changing conditions rather than recurrent causes. Perhaps the most significant difference is that while in the thirties the revolting young were very much part of a wide upsurge in the whole society, today they are strangely isolated in a world of their own. In the thirties, the "people" of campus rhetoric had a definite empirical counterpart—union workers, dust-bowl farmers, depressed urban middle class. Today, "the people" is largely a mystified concept. The empirical people are to a large extent middle America—as a revolutionary mass they exist primarily in campus imagination.

The impact of campus mutiny on national policy has been significant, but largely indirect. With a few exceptions like the "frontlash" project, the overt content of the youth

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revolt has tended to create an isolated subculture of youthful imagination rather than significant alternatives for the public world. Not the fact but the form of the youth revolt raises a question about conditions rather than causes—the place of the young in a postindustrial society.

II

WHAT PRECISELY is the youth "revolution"? A great part of the confusion may be due to the fact that it isn't anything precisely. It is an amorphous, discontinuous series of outbursts, which attach themselves to anything from fads in dress and music to radical activism. Their common denominator is distress rather than demand, loneliness rather than confidence.

The positive traits of campus upheaval are common to youth movements of all ages. Any youth movement must stress the special problems and assets of the young—their lack of a firm place in society, their spontaneity, enthusiasm, and idealism. It must degrade those qualities the young do not ordinarily possess, such as skill, persistence, competence; and avoid problems the young normally do not face, such as assuring daily sustenance, public safety, or long-range planning. Youth movements invariably tinge their idealism with a sense of bitter disillusion: brought up on the ideals of their society, the young tend to be shocked by its realities, whether capitalist, Communist, or socialist. The young share a common sense of being in the society but not of it, thereby reflecting quite accurately their relation to the economy. And for entirely understandable reasons, the young have often shared a sense of mission to redeem their society with their spontaneity and dedication, coupled with a conviction that this cannot be done by hum-drum means. Work is vain, dedication and drama alone avail.

In addition to the common traits of adolescence, present-day youth movements share a common perspective of posttechnological affluence. This is a bit more surprising. Even in America, the affluent society is at best 20 years old and remains a class phenomenon. The "affluent young" on state college campuses are, objectively, anything but affluent.

Yet affluence is a state of mind as much as a level of consumption. It reflects relative freedom from ordinary economic cares and preoccupations: in terms of the most elementary immediate experience, it is the mentality of the man who can ask himself, what shall I do today?—and does not receive an immediate, unequivocal answer in terms of daily need. In this sense, affluence can reflect, as in America and Western Europe, the condition of a society whose total productive capacity exceeds its total needs. But it can also reflect the added productive capacity represented by a team of horses in a village where the family cow pulls the plow by day and gives milk at night. In the "socialist" countries of Eastern Europe, comprehensive medical and social care, embracing everything from job security to free vacation tours, creates symptoms of affluence in spite of rather low standards of consumption. Finally, the isolation of the academic community from daily demands, required for academic work, may help to create a very distinctly affluent perspective.

The place of the young in a society that accepts the affluent model as normative is significantly different from that in a society of scarcity. An affluent society provides for its young a far greater degree of autonomy from many pressing daily occupations, not only objectively but also because it expects far less from the young in terms of cooperation in securing food, shelter, and even an atmosphere of cooperation within the family unit. Unlike his counterpart in the 1820s, a romantic rebel today can "drop out" almost completely for extended periods of time while still enjoying much of the affluence, security, and mobility of an advanced society.

To be sure, there have always been young

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men who enjoyed this privilege, but in the past they have been relatively few. Being a revolutionary, if we are to trust Cohn-Bendit, is a great way to live; but it requires the time and leisure of a student, and in the past students have constituted a miniscule proportion of the young. Today, some 50 percent of young Americans go on to some form of higher training, only entering the labor force between 18 and 26. For some years after ceasing to be children they are effectively excluded from assuming adult social roles. The youth "revolution" today can be a mass phenomenon because there is a mass of the young that has the objective prerequisities for engaging in it.

The affluent society makes a youth "revolution" not only possible but virtually necessary. The reason is not simply the inevitable discrepancy between expectations of affluence and objective reality. Even when affluence is quite objective—or perhaps especially when that is the case—the place of the young in society becomes precarious. Given the high degree of skill demanded by modern production, the young have little opportunity for significant participation in the work of the society. They may be enthusiastic—but in economic terms they constitute seasonal unskilled labor. At the same time technological sophistication eliminates many of the marginal tasks that had traditionally provided a bridge between play and work, and where it does not, it makes them appear onerous and insignificant. At a time in life when a young person most acutely experiences the need for a socially significant role to establish his personal identity, a society patterned on the affluent model consigns him to the role of an object of indulgence. It is not surprising that the young seek to establish their distinct identity either by dropping out or by adopting the mock-heroic role of the rebel.

There would be something radically wrong if, for some ten years after ceasing to be children, the young continued to accept without protest the role of pampered children. But there is also something radically wrong with a social model which offers them this role.

III

THESE OBSERVATIONS leave the question of fact unanswered but they do suggest an answer to the question of method. First of all, they establish the lesson of Karl Marx: there is a definite connection between technology and ideology, between the modes and means of production and the modes and means of social existence.

Economic dependence, however, is a necessary but not a sufficient explanatory principle. Analogous economic development is compatible with more than one form of social organization and behavior. A catalytic principle is needed to explain why particular forms emerge at a particular time and place. In part, to be sure, the reasons are historical —the economic prerequisities for a campus revolt existed in the '50s, but America's confidence in the ability of its leadership to cope with the problems of the time did much to prevent an explosion. Only with the loss of confidence—brought about by the failure of basic policies and signalized by the death of a President—did the inherent tensions actually erupt. But an ad hoc explanation deals with causes rather than conditions—for understanding conditions, a generic catalytic principle is needed.

Campus revolutionaries tend to find such a catalyst in the Sombartian principle of power struggle which Lenin singled out as the key to his interpretation of Marxism. Its appeal is understandable enough: struggle, especially the rather indefinite "revolutionary" struggle, is a form of activity that places a premium on the assets of youth. As an analytic tool, however, the Leninist emphasis, more familiar in the West as the "cold-war perspective," is viciously counterproductive. Seeing everything, in R. Roland's words, "from the viewpoint of an army commander" obscures both the complexity of social problems and possibilities of solution.

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The social strategy of such "Leninism" is to transform problems to be solved into struggles to be won and enemies to be destroyed. Effective in mobilizing energies for battle, it is unable to use them except to do battle: Leninist regimes, having won power, are notoriously incapable of building free, just societies—instead, they are borne into the fratricidal process Stalin described as "intensification of class struggle *following* the Revolution."

For purposes of social analysis and construction, a different historical conception is more helpful. Engels suggests it in his letter to Bloch in 1894 when he writes that his and Marx's preoccupation with economics and revolution was an understandable but unfortunate oversimplification. The structure of society is not a passive reflection of productive relations, but rather a product of the dialectical interaction of economic and ideological factors. Technology alone does not guarantee smooth social functioning or cause social crises. Neither does ideology alone. The crucial factor is their interrelation: a society can function smoothly if its productive processes can meet its physical needs—and if its images of man and society are capable of rationalizing those processes. Ideological appropriation of physical reality is the catalyst—struggle is incidental to it. Social crises reflect a discrepancy between technology and ideology, while social progress is a process of mutual adjustment rather than of forcible imposition of one factor on the other.

This reading of Marxism provides us with the methodological tool for understanding phenomena like the youth "revolution." The Leninist linear reading cannot explain it: neither internal nor international issues fit the pattern of worldwide struggle ranking the "good guys" against "bad guys." There are problems to be solved rather than unequivocal "struggles" between good and evil. In particular, the mutiny of the young is not an extension of a struggle between Soviet and/or Chinese "socialist" power and American "capitalist" power. Rather, it reflects a dialectic of ideology and technology. The place and image of being young in postindustrial society is far more relevant for understanding the youth "revolution" than the oppositon of "revolution" and "reaction."

We need to suspend the fierce imagery of campus rhetoriticians and their construction-site opponents. We need rather to ask about the relation of ideology and technology in concrete human experience. First, what is the impact of technological change on the experience of being young? Second, what are the ideological tools in terms of which the young seek to appropriate that change? And, finally, how would our image of man and society have to change to be capable of rationalizing new productive relations, and how would those relations have to be ordered to safeguard the values represented by that image?

To describe the impact of the scientific-technological revolution as "alienation" is accurate but not very helpful. Certainly the young—and for the matter humans *qua* human—find the postindustrial society alien: bewildering, incomprehensible, threatenting. Men appropriate their world through the double process of conceptualization and manipulation. The world becomes familiar as men handle it, work in it and with it, and as they incorporate it in an overall world view. These processes have in fact broken down—but the question is precisely where and how.

The technological-scientific revolution has changed the role of the young by creating a need for extended training periods while at the same time obsuring the relation between training and practice, effort and effect. This is a generic feature of technological complexity. Putting it quite crudely, a subsistence farmer literally eats what he grows: his toil and aching muscles have an immediate personal significance in the feel of a full stomach. His production is not pointless activity, his product not soulless commodity.

The factory worker's experience is differ-

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ent. There is little visible link between the effort he exerts and its effect on his immediate social world. His is alienated labor: effort dissociated from effect. A basic problem for any society beyond subsistence level is one of providing compensatory mechanisms for technological alienation. The industrial age dealt with it in part through the wage system. If the wage functioned objectively, as an instrument for control of labor and distribution, its subjective significance was no less important: the wage packet functioned as a link between effort and effect, translating labor into needed goods. Theoretically, an adequate wage could compensate for technological alienation. The concern of the unions with wages—or of the individual worker with what Karl Marx, living on an unearned income, perceived as "soulless commodity," was not an expression of the greed and materialism of the unenlightened proletariat. It was an expression of concern. The cash nexus may have been a symbol of alienation, but it was also one of its compensating factors.

In the postindustrial age the dissociation of effort and effect increases sharply while the compensating mechanisms become obscured and obsolete. As goods become widely available and payment effectively invisible in a tangle of delayed payment and paper accounting, the significance of effort diminishes. Effort appears pointless, goods become soulless commodity. The split between effort and effect, the two poles of personal identity, becomes endemic.

In the age of scarcity, liberals assumed that once the goods of daily life become available with minimum effort, human life would be freed from drudgery, and human energy would flow into "creative" tasks. They did not anticipate the secondary effect: that human life will be deprived of the token tasks through which man builds a sense of self-confident identity, relates effort and effect, and gains the habits of work demanded by creative effort: in short, that man, no longer forced to manipulate his world, will lose the ability to conceptualize it.

In the postindustrial age, a quasi-magical relation of push-button and instant product replaces effort as the basic, experienced link between man and his world. It not only expresses but also reinforces human alienation in a machine world.

The academic intelligentsia—especially the students—experiences the effect of technological alienation most acutely. Young intellectuals are the segment of the population most completely deprived of—or liberated from—the need and opportunity of handling the world, of linking matter and meaning through effort. Academic effort is real enough and its effects far-reaching, but its connection with need is seldom acted out.

Alienation is finally the result of a sense of the ineffectiveness of effort and anonymity of effect: the gnawing suspicion that what a man does has no relation to what he hopes for or enjoys, and, conversely, that the things he enjoys and hopes for are a fortuitous product of anonymous forces. Students are not alone in experiencing it: it is the problem of the least as well as the most privileged. It has always been the problem of the children of the aristocracy; today it is a problem for national and racial minorities whose traditional forms of effort are not sufficiently sophisticated to produce an effect in a postindustrial society. It is also the problem of women, displaced by technology from traditional roles but barred by old habits of thought and work from assuming new ones. It is the problem of humans in a society in which significant roles appear to be reserved for machines.

IV

THOUGH CREATING an explosive situation, alienation itself does not bring about the explosion. In the America of Eisenhower and Kennedy it was effectively compensated by the faith that though the forces may be anonymous they are effective and benign.

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The explosion came when the basic concepts of the Eisenhower era, anti-Communism and Keynesianism, the struggle against totalitarianism abroad and scarcity at home proved inapplicable to new problems. For in the '60s the problem was no longer simply one of "stopping Communism" but rather of creating a viable democratic alternative, no longer one of raising the GNP but rather of distributing affluence.

The quixotic nature of the campus mutiny, however, may well be due to the fact that the ideological alternatives available to the campus are still geared to the realities of the age of scarcity in which total need vastly exceeded total productive capacity. Within such a matrix, any effort is in principle significant as contributing to total capacity—the secret of Adam Smith's invisible hand. Within such a matrix, society is inevitably polarized between drones and drudges—those whose needs are met and those whose needs, because of inadequate total capacity, must remain unmet.

Campus ideologies today reflect this matrix far more than the realities of a postindustrial society. One alternative articulates the situation of the drudges for whom work is drudgery but inevitable. Its strategy is to make virtue out of necessity by stressing the inherent nobility of work and desirability of the compensations it offers. Freedom from drudgery, impossible in any case, is presented as decadent, and experienced as unnecessary: the drones make the decisions and bear the responsibility.

The second alternative articulates the experience of the drones, making a virtue out of privilege. In the experience of the drone, work is unnecessary, for his physical and social needs are met by drudges. From this perspective the proper pursuit of man is not work but pure, spontaneous self-expression. Any concern with needs is degrading, and as the ideal of the drudges is a society in which all men labor and none is exempt, the ideal of the drones is a society in which all are aristocrats and no man labors.

The first alternative is represented by puritan and proletarian ideologies, by Ayn Rand's objectivism of but a few years ago and the present cult of Third World revolutionism. Both are profoundly conservative: both see affluence as the villain and the solution as a reversion to a simpler age. In the objectivist utopia, complexity of technological relations is resolved through strict accounting. Nothing is allowed to appear "free"; everything must be paid for individually. Effort is never anonymous or social; it is always individual, tied to individual needs. In the Third World version, effort becomes radically social and heroic, either by substituting guerrilla warfare for productive activity or by making productive activity heroic. Thus the harvest becomes the "battle for the grain," manufacture becomes a "struggle to fulfill the plan." There is much talk of duty, little of freedom.

The appeal of the proletarian/puritan approach lies largely in its recognition of the need to make effort significant—and of the uses of adversity in achieving this. But for good or bad, neither its puritan nor proletarian version is viable in an affluent society. The heroic model failed disastrously even in much less developed Eastern Europe. It invokes a "struggle" that is theoretic and abstract, though the work it demands is all too immediate and concrete. "Moral incentives," paradoxically dear to materialist theoreticians, proved at best partly effective, and only in situations in which the theoretical struggle had a practical counterpart. On campus, this heroic approach has produced mock-heroics. The puritan version did not even have an opportunity to fail. Technological complexity makes Ayn Rand's simplification impossible in principle.

In a sense, the utopian/aristocratic approach is much more congenial to the experience of the young in postindustrial society. On campus, obligations appear and often are conventional, and the effort required to meet them appears arbitrary. A strategy that seeks not to make effort sig-

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nificant but to eliminate it is much more appealing, especially if linked to a vision of spontaneous activity as the genuinely human pursuit.

In a very crude version, this is the alternative offered by Madison Avenue. Its logic is simple: since in an affluent society production is justified by replacement of effort rather than meeting of needs, Madison Avenue holds out the vision of effortlessness as the way to fulfillment. Have, not do.

This approach has had a remarkable impact on America. Not only do a great many of the young consider having to exert effort the chief source of their alienation, but a great many adults, including educators, see the solution to youth protest in making things easier, in doing for the young more and more of what they can do for themselves. Perhaps the most striking testimony to the effectiveness of Madison Avenue is that parents who have "liberated" their children from virtually every opportunity to assume responsibility and whose children are "still" restless, frequently share the conviction that their children need even more freedom from responsibility, more done for them.

In this crude version, this self-destructive aristocratic utopia is persuasive because it reflects rather than challenges the position of man as consumer in an industrially mature society. It is self-destructive because the consumer is also the producer, and the habits of effortlessness and dependence may be virtues in the consumer but are vices in the producer. A modern utopia need not be a utopia for drudges, but it does have to be a utopia of producers rather than of conspicuous consumers.

The problem of man as producer, absent in the Madison Avenue utopia, is very much present in the rather more sophisticated version presented by neo-Marxists like Herbert Marcuse. As interpreted on campus, Marcuse shares the Madison Avenue conviction that the effortless utopia is possible and desirable, and that our failure is the failure to realize it. Thus the mutiny of the young against purposive effort is legitimate, not only because effort has been misdirected but because it is gratuitous.

Marcuse in effect radicalizes Marx in a rather interesting way. In the famous passage in *Kapital* Marx distinguishes the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom, and his reference to a short work day suggests that what he had in mind was economically necessary activity and free-time activity respectively. In Marx, the realm of freedom makes the realm of necessity meaningful: man works in order to enjoy freedom from need. In turn, the realm of necessity makes the realm of freedom possible: the achievements of work win man leisure. According to Marcuse, the realm of necessity has become superfluous: technology is at least in principle capable of replacing all necessary activity. Human life is in principle capable of becoming entirely a realm of spontaneous, unnecessary activity. Only old habits, psychological and institutional, stand in the way.

Marcuse's estimate of the possibilities of technology may or may not be accurate. The odds are against it: the construction, servicing, and control of an economic system so sophisticated that it could meet all productive and distributive needs is likely to demand more rather than less skill, discipline, and dependability on the part of labor. Reliance on spontaneity is notoriously more compatible with beachcombing than with sophisticated technology.

But even were it technologically feasible, Marcuse's vision would remain problematic. Marcuse is right in seeing work performed under alien, arbitrary constraint as senseless drudgery. But it is not at all clear that its aristocratic opposite, the spontaneous activity "liberated" from all external motives, is the alternative. Traditionally, those sectors of the population which have most closely approximated such "liberation"—the children of the aristocracy, the children of the superrich, and now the children of the afflu-

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ent—have constituted the most frustrated, decadent, and alienated sector of society. Effort becomes meaningful not by becoming unnecessary, but by becoming purposeful and effective. The dichotomy of drudgery and leisure leaves out the uniquely human alternative, necessary work, freely undertaken for good and sufficient reason.

This is the democratic alternative. Even if Marx's scheme of necessity and freedom were economically invalid—which is far from evident—it would still retain its social and psychological validity. Freedom is not empty when it is won through ability to meet necessity through effort—when it is based on democratic work. As long as it is based on dependence on others, whether slaves or robots, it is alienation. Necessity can become meaningful rather than oppressive when man appropriates it as a means of freedom: when it is simply met by the efforts of others, it remains degrading. Marx's hopes for the redeeming role of the proletariat were based on the fact that the proletariat wins its freedom by meeting its own needs through its own labor, not by dependence on others, and so need not itself become an exploiting class.

Marcuse himself may well be trying to say something very similar—that work becomes meaningful when it serves a purpose rather than an external demand. His emphasis on an aesthetic perspective of man and world, his insistence on speaking of *surplus* repression, all hint in this direction. But that has not been his impact on campus. There the lesson of Marcuse has become virtually indistinguishable from the lesson of Madison Avenue: effort is degrading and objectively unnecessary, demanded only by old-fashioned administrators and equally old-fashioned superegos. Hence the response is the "Great Refusal"—chemical or political—to destroy the system which makes demands without, presumably, disrupting the flow of benefits from a self-operating technology, and the "new sensibility" which will replace inner need for effort with instant self-realization. From this perspective, work is polarized between the abstractions of drudgery and play, and the young—some of them—see play as their birthright.

Marcuse's recent loss of popularity on campus may well be due to his misgivings about this bowdlerized version of his ideas. But the misgivings come too late: utopian ideology has inseparably associated all effort with the problems it seeks to resolve. Any effort to resolve them perpetuates them because it perpetuates the age of effort rather than ushering in the age of spontaneity. The only truly "radical" approach is to reject the problems and solutions alike, to withdraw from the world of effort into the world of sensibility.

This version of the utopian ideology fits rather neatly with the campus version of the ideology of heroic effort. Revolution is the praxis of utopia: since problems have to be surpassed rather than solved, "revolutionary" symbolic acts are appropriate. Closing down the University might not improve the quality of education just as "offing the pigs" might not contribute to a more humane and equitable assurance of public safety, but it will render social problems insoluable—and so force the society to transcend them.

V

THE SUCCESS of the new revolutionary-utopian synthesis on campus is due not to any ability to solve the problems of the young but rather to its ability to rationalize them. But while the revolutionary utopianism does accurately reflect the experience of the young, it does nothing to change it. Read in revolutionary-utopian terms, social issues and personal problems may become at once comprehensible and insoluble. The shift in campus strategy makes the point clearly. Social issues have become accessible to campus concern through a translation from the terms of the external world into the terms of emotions, attitudes, and feelings. The issues are real, but the campus "radicalizes"

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them—makes them subjective, highly general, and charged with the emotions of personal problems. Thus the very real problem of minorities in an increasingly homogeneous society has become the problem of "racism" rather than civil rights, the solution an equivalent of dropping out and turning on—black separatism and black consciousness. Similarly, the complex issues of the place of women in society became the question of "sexism," and even urgent questions of public safety at home and abroad have turned into emotional issues of being "for peace," for "love," "against oppression," or hating "racist, sexist, imperialist pig America." The translation is not always this extreme, and there are still a great many students struggling to retain their hold on reality, but the direction of the revolutionary-utopian ideology is unmistakable and powerful because it makes problems appear amenable to the strategy available to the young—dropping out and turning on.

Yet the demand for "immediate abolition of racism, sexism, imperialism, and pollution" will necessarily be frustrated. It can lead only to greater and greater frustration, sharper and sharper confrontation—and ultimately to repression, whether by reaction or revolution, since even "the revolution" could not meet its own demands. (This is but one sense in which revolution and counterrevolution become equivalents.) The revolutionary-utopian ideology has given the young a superficial sense of instant significance, but the cost is damnably high. The basic problem of rationalizing postindustrial production has disappeared behind a revolutionary-utopian smoke screen. An ideology simply reflecting the conditions of production is not enough. Nor is an ideology that simply reaffirms a perennial ideal. What is needed is an ideology that could play the role of a catalyst between ideals and the realities of the postindustrial age.

Prerequisites for a catalytic ideology do exist today. In spite of the appeal of the revolutionary-utopian strategy, the great escape was not and is not what the great majority of students seek to achieve. The problem, after all, is not that the young refuse to accept the role of pampered, useless children: that was always the positive moment in their mutiny. *The problem is that the society has no real role for its young.* The policy emerging from recent confrontations —roughly, to push off the young into even more luxurious academic sandlots while stationing armed guards around them—is counterproductive. The young have a right to a significant role in society, not only for their own sake but for the sake of society as well. A catalytic ideology would have to be capable of providing social roles both objectively significant and experienced as such.

The objective problem can be solved because it is not simply a matter of technology but of its ideological appropriation as well. Effort loses objective significance not simply because postindustrial society can produce more than it needs, but because it is unable to use its productive capacity to improve the quality of life. A capitalist economy is inevitably bound to reinvest for profit, creating an inflation of unneeded goods, but it lacks the mechanisms to channel its surplus capacity to meet the need for a distribution of affluence—public health, education, housing. When Adam Smith's invisible hand ceases to function with the overcoming of social scarcity, a capitalist society has no way of replacing it. The result is the paradoxical situation of effort invested so that one part of the society would not have to roll up car windows by hand while another part remains deprived of essential services.

Nothing in the nature of postindustrial production demands such a society. Continued reinvestment in surplus production is economically as well as socially undesirable. It has an inflationary effect on the economy as well as on skill levels demanded of the labor force. It creates social and environmental problems not only morally bad but also economically damaging. Modern pro-

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duction requires a social structure capable of coordinating national productive effort, channelling investment into areas of need, and preventing major dislocation of the economy by irresponsible decisions. A postindustrial society requires a socialist social structure to make effort objectively meaningful.

The inherent danger of socialism, however, is that in establishing a social machinery for economic direction it creates a concentration of power—the coercive power of the state and the power of focused economy—far beyond anything capitalism dreamed of and makes men far more dependent than free. Campus rebels, while aware of the limitations of capitalist economy, have been blissfully ignorant of this tendency of socialism. A catalytic ideology would need to take it into account, and counter it with a consistent, radical demand for democracy. The first priority of socialism must be to safeguard rights of free critique, free press, vigorous dissent, individual responsibility and initiative. It has to be democratic both in outline and detail, striving to achieve maximum participation—giving each man an opportunity to function as a member of a community rather than as its beneficiary or victim.

Student slogans about participation grope in this direction. It might be more efficient to have a state agency build low-cost housing than to organize a tenants' cooperative through which to channel funds, but the rebelling young are beginning to recognize that the efficiency is self-defeating. The same is true of community clinics and college dormitories. While social action is necessary to make individual action effective, it is not sufficient—it is the individual action, what Marx called "socially useful labor," which gives men confidence in their identity and a sense of social participation, and can transform campus mutineers into a positive social force.

Postindustrial productive relations create conditions for democracy as a life-style and not only a political system. To a great extent, the complexity of postindustrial production eliminates economic justification both for the class of drudges and the class of idlers. Income differences tend to be quantitative, differences of earned income. Within a socialist structure, a technologically advanced society can be a classless society of wage earners rather than a society polarized between owners and the owned.

But the anarchist/authoritarian temper of the campus mutiny suggests that post-technological production does not create the psychological conditions for democracy. Rather, it tends to create habits of dependence, irresponsibility, and anonymity, directly contrary to habits required for a democratic life-style. Here a conscious attack is needed. Neither indulgence nor repression is relevant. What is needed is the democratic opportunity *to do,* to accept responsibility and participate in the work of the society, from shared family responsibilities to opportunities for dealing with political and social problems.

In terms of the campus, this justifies the entire range of student participation in academic administration and services, as well as off-campus involvement. But the basic need is to make the students' professional work significant. A student's personal identity is first of all that of a student—and if this is

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experienced as trivial or insignificant, no amount of marginal activity can replace the self-esteem lost through deprecation of the primary role. Making study significant does not mean making it "relevant" in a fashionable sense of the word by restricting it to the narrow horizons of students' immediate experience. Such strategy may keep students amused, but it gives them little sense of the importance of their work—or of themselves as engaged in it. Rather, making study significant means taking students seriously, showing them the same respect scholars show their colleagues. The scholarship presented in courses deserves to be thorough, and the standards demanded high. Expecting a faculty to teach and paying it for teaching, and expecting students to study and rewarding them for it, are prime requisites. Utilizing the skills of graduates in social service rather than surplus production is their counterpart.

None of this, to be sure, speaks directly to the problems raised by student rebels. Those problems are cosmic ones, stated in intensely personal terms. Any concrete social action will necessarily disappoint them. A person stripped of all the accouterments of personal identity—of skills, interests, obligations—may well be permanently alienated simply because he has lost the ability to function in any social context.

There are signs that Americans are becoming aware of the continuity between responsibility and self-respect. Even on campus, there is increasing evidence of a sorting out process which separates the desperate from the concerned. It is by no means an automatic development, but it is a possible and a promising one. Given a consistent commitment on the part of all who deal with the young to provide opportunities for participation and assumption of responsibility and an equally consistent resistance to the clamor of the frightened for fewer demands and greater "freedom," it is a development that can effectively compensate for the technological displacement of the young.

Nothing in the nature of postindustrial production guarantees this: quite the contrary, it is entirely possible for most parents and the society as a whole to deprive the young of all participation. But there is everything to make a meaningful participation possible. The mutiny of the young need not end in irrelevance and repression. The displacement of the young that produces it is not simply the result of a technology that makes effort unnecessary, but also of an obsolete ideology that regards it as heroic —and onerous. Socialist recognition of social rights and democratic recognition of individual responsibility make another conception possible: democratic work as the self-expression of a free man in a just society. The growing disillusion of the majority of students with the heroics of their over-thirty ideological mentors, their growing involvement in social, political, and academic processes and their evident concern with the realities rather than the psychodrama of social change hold out hope for a democratic alternative to violence and repression. They deserve our support. If they can win the freedom to accept responsibility and show a willingness to accept being young not as a privilege or an onus, but as a valid, responsible way of participating in social existence, the youth revolution will become unnecessary. It will also succeed.

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Brendan Sexton

Unions and the Black Power Brokers

MANY YOUNG BLACK ACTIVISTS, hearing from both the Left and the Right that unions are their main enemy, and believing what they hear, have joined the chorus of labor's critics. Some choose to spin their wheels in generally vain efforts to stimulate black business and economic activity, sometimes in already bankrupt or marginal ghetto business. They might instead be creating centers of black power and influence inside already organized unions, or through the organization of black and brown workers at the margins of the economy.

Some black militants have come into the unions, but as sworn enemies, bent on destruction. In recent months, for example, some ran for local union office in the UAW on campaign pledges to drive out the "honky and Polish pigs." They were surprised when they were snowed under by both black and white voters at the same time that other young blacks were elected, many to the highest union posts. Even where black workers formed clear majorities, the black *racist* candidates were defeated.

In Detroit a number of so-called "Revolutionary Unions" have been active in the UAW, principally at Chrysler plants. The most widely publicized of these, the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM), has entered candidates in various local union elections, but without any success. At the same time, a black man was elected vice-president of the Dodge local, another as recording secretary, and others to the local union executive board. Several members of the shop committee, probably a somewhat more important group than the executive board, are Negroes. Most of the elected blacks won over DRUM opposition. Committeemen and stewards are elected by plant district—trim shop, final assembly, tool room, foundry, etc.—and in many of these districts black workers are a majority. Still, DRUM has not yet elected any candidates. In contrast, one of the largest UAW Chrysler locals, No. 7 (7,000 members), is led by Negroes. The president, Bill Gilbert, who is also a member of the Chrysler National Negotiating Committee, leads a black caucus that has formed alliances with whites. Whites are included in the leadership of the local, even though an all-black slate could conceivably be elected. Gilbert, a proudly self-conscious, intelligent, and militant black man, has eschewed overblown rhetoric in favor of straightforward assertion of his and his brothers' rights.

Hank Gant, the new president of Local 212, another large Chrysler local (10,000 members), is also black. Negroes, of course, lead a number of other UAW locals. At Ford Local 600—UAW's largest—for example, many units (in size the approximate equivalent of locals) are led by blacks.

The young blacks who turn away from unions might ask themselves: how can black people—most of whom are workers—achieve power, status, autonomy other than through union organization? Isn't it clear that efforts to promote "black enterprise," even if successful beyond Roy Innis's fondest dream, can affect only a handful of black people? And if the black employees of the new enterprises are not

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organized, won't they suffer the same unrestrained exploitation as most workers employed in small business? Black people quite naturally wish to own and control institutions and enterprises within their own communities. But such control can have only a minimal and long-delayed effect on Negro life as a whole.

It is the fundamental nature of unions, not the blind or bigoted conduct of some business agents, that matters here. Unions end the powerlessness of workers, black or white. They bring authority within reach and under control. They open avenues to social change. They enable the lowly among us—garbage workers, for instance—to force the powerful to consult with them, to negotiate the terms of their employment.

Well-organized unions are *inherently* powerful, and their power is accessible to those blacks, browns, or whites who lead or influence them. Aside from their primary power on the job, unions can lay their hands on strategic levers of social change. They often influence the investment of vast pension and insurance reserves. Some of the nation's largest housing developments have been built with such funds, as well as hospitals, clinics, resorts, and other community facilities. Under black influence, strategic and constructive investment of these funds could enrich life in more than one corner of the ghetto.

Unions collect and dispense significant sums in political campaigns. They can affect legislators. They issue publications to their members. They have access for eight hours each day to millions of workers on the job. They provide legal counsel for the victimized. They can buy time on radio and TV. In meetings, negotiations, strikes, conventions they provide opportunity for the development of leadership skills. They hire people: organizers, service representatives, professionals, secretaries, etc.; and they can afford, for special causes, to rent offices, buy supplies, pay salaries. This means power, social power.

It is, moreover, an unrecognized fact of American life that *more black people belong to unions than to any other non-religious organization.* The black membership of the UAW and Teamsters (ALA) alone cannot be less than 750,000, and it is likely that another 2–2.5 million Negroes are members of unions affiliated with the AFL–CIO. Industrial unions are probably the most racially integrated organizations we have—not necessarily because of inherent virtue, but because the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) saw from the beginning that it had to enlist black workers on more or less equal terms if workers were to be organized at all.

To the possible amazement and consternation of young radicals who rallied against the UFT in the prolonged Ocean Hill-Brownsville dispute, black paraprofessionals in the schools, when recently offered the choice, chose the UFT as their bargaining representative. Many of these paraprofessionals recognize power and status when they see it, even if their young sympathizers mistake rhetoric for the real thing. The UFT rose in stature to meet them (as even this critic of some of its past activities will admit). The local leadership's willingness to call for, and ability to win, a strike vote among teachers in support of paraprofessional demands is certainly one of the bravest and most imaginative attempts at racial reconciliation that New York City has recently seen.

Paraprofessionals seem especially susceptible to calls for union organization. They do not enjoy professional status or tenure. They are often grossly underpaid compared with the professionals with whom they work. Their occupations may be so poorly defined that they wind up handling the unpleasant jobs that the professionals and organized workers don't want to do. This rising group of disadvantaged blacks can clearly profit from union organization, and they know it.[1]

[1] In addition to the AFT, the State, County and

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UNIONS have made real economic gains for black as well as white workers. Though still far from equality, unionized Negroes enjoy most of the gains won by whites: equal pay for equal work, seniority, paid vacations and holidays, hospital-medical insurance, pensions, representation on the job, etc. In the years of the official War Against Poverty, union victories in hospitals and service trades may well have had as much economic impact in the ghetto as all OEO programs combined.

In the South, black workers are coming to see in unions a real promise of social and political advance. Unionized black public employees (State, County and Municipal Workers and the Drug and Hospital Workers Local 1199) have recently waged historic strikes in Memphis, Charlotte, Atlanta. Martin Luther King went to his tragic death in one of these struggles, and Ralph Abernathy to jail in another. Among the more than 2.5 million hospital workers, hundreds of thousands must be black. Yet, not more than 15 percent of all hospital workers are unionized, though they work for miserable wages under degrading conditions.

In the South and elsewhere, many Negroes have learned that more than secondary roles are open to them in unions. Though their representation in leadership is inadequate, *Negroes have won more power and status in unions than in any other significant social institution.* This assertion will be hotly denied by some radical intellectuals, but its validity is supported by my own experience and by the only study of black power I know of that included unions.[2] That study, conducted for the Urban League in Chicago and Cook County, found that among black "policy-makers" in private organizations, "unions had a larger percentage—13 percent—than any other institution."

"In welfare and religious organizations, whose constituents were often largely Negro, Negroes occupied 8 percent of the [policy-making] positions. . . ." The universities (including Chicago, a citadel of radical academic opinion) "had a negligible 1 percent representation. . . . Most of these universities had few Negro students, faculty members, or administrators. . . . The University of Illinois had one [policy-maker]. Roosevelt University, the sole institution that had a number of Negroes at the top, was the newest. Only five out of 380 policy-making positions in these universities are held by Negroes." Further,

> The elected political offices and the elected trade union offices account for only 11 percent of all policy-making positions in Cook County. Yet almost half of all the Negro policy-makers were found in these areas—137 out of 283. In three-fourths of the former CIO local unions, Negroes were found to be represented in leadership; and while two-fifths of the former AFL locals included no Negroes among their leaders, one-third had leaderships that were 15 percent or more Negro.

(Even the hated AFL looks integrated compared to Chicago's universities, churches, and welfare groups where many of labor's most savage critics cluster.)

In New York, the percentage of black union leaders might be somewhat lower than in Chicago, but probably not dramatically so. In Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, and other cities where industrial unions are strong, it would no doubt be higher.

In my own union (UAW), Negro membership may reach 400,000. A number of UAW locals are led by Negroes. About 80 blacks serve as full-time international representatives. Perhaps only the NAACP and the Urban League, among social-action organizations, have more blacks working

Municipal Workers Union—especially in its New York District 37—and Drug and Hospital Employees Local 1199 have campaigned for and sometimes won their support.

[2] "Black Powerlessness in Chicago," by Harold M. Baron, with Harriet Stulman, Richard Rothstein, and Renard Davis, *Trans-action,* November 1968.

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at the professional level. Two of the 22 members of the union's International Executive Board are black, as are the directors of some of the union's national departments. They are all men and women who came up through the ranks and survived many political battles. Though not yet equally represented in leadership, blacks have done better in the UAW than in any other national nonblack organization known to me. As the Chicago study shows, black people are coming on in other unions as well.

The record of many unions is a sad one, of course, if we judge by absolute standards. Almost all have shirked responsibility to the poor and to minorities. They have been, and in many places remain, proper objects of black anger. Even now, the militants are trying to batter down walls that virtually exclude them from some craft unions in Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit and New York.

For these and other reasons, my own union has taken a walk from the AFL–CIO. Still, I believe that unions remain the most powerful and among the most persistent advocates of general social welfare. In job action and legislative chambers, they have spent significant sums and applied considerable muscle to advance the interests of the poor, the near-poor, and the various minorities who live on the margins of society. Moreover, AFL–CIO unions have organized and thereby raised above poverty levels at least a couple of million workers.

Though blacks must go into the streets to enter some unions, the struggle often reflects a more realistic assessment of the union potential than that made by many radicals and liberals. For the smart blacks want in. They know a good thing when they see it with their own eyes.

Even the walls of craft unions can tumble. Through its pre-apprenticeship training programs, the A. Philip Randolph Institute has placed several hundred young Negroes in building-trades unions. James Haughton, organizer of the Harlem Unemployment Center, has led groups of black men to construction sites in the early morning, there to badger union stewards and construction foremen until some of his men are hired. Almost unknown outside Harlem until recently, Haughton has spent the last five years at "shape ups, picket lines, demonstrations, and in urgent negotiations," fighting to get black workers into construction unions, according to Marion Sanders in the *Times Sunday Magazine*. "I don't consider the unions my adversaries," Haughton said. "They're too pitiful—just looking out for their own guys. We've got to put on pressure where the power is, where the loot is—on the employers. They can hire anyone they want."

In contrast, the intellectual's view of unions often sounds glib and rather sanctimonious to the seasoned unionist. While the racial practices of workers and unions are conspicuously imperfect, they are somewhat less malevolent than those of most other institutions, including those where many liberals and radicals work.

Membership rosters of most craft unions are about as integrated as the staffs of various radical and liberal publications in which they are denounced. They are certainly more integrated than the staff of the *New York Times Sunday Magazine* where "unions" (all unions, not just some of them) were recently described as the "principal barriers" standing in the way of black progress; and certainly more integrated than the faculty of Princeton University, where the black author of this charge has a temporary attachment.

Are black people represented beyond token numbers (if at all) on the staffs of the *New York Review of Books*, *Commonweal*, the *Village Voice*, *New Republic*, or the *Nation*? Of published copy in those journals, certainly not more than one in a thousand lines can be written by blacks. Yet, in the past few years each has printed its quota of attacks on "racist" unions and workers without any reference to their own failures.

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As for "higher education," until the last year or two, the record of the universities has been shameful. Even considering recent advances, only Temple and Wayne State—among all the nation's major white universities—include anything like a representative number of black students; and with a few honorable exceptions, faculties are about as integrated as local unions of the Sheet Metal Workers Union.

MANY YOUNG NEGROES will continue to regard unions with hostility so long as antiunion superficialities remain in vogue among the left-leaning intellectuals who give ideological guidance at first or second hand to young activists.

New Left attitudes toward unions are perhaps merely an extension into this generation of opinion formed and fostered by sections of the Old Left. With short and periodic lapses, the intellectual Left in the United States has always been hostile to unions. Though generally disavowing explicit expectations that unions would become revolutionary vehicles, the Left nonetheless continually denounced unions for failing to raise revolutionary banners. In its most extreme form, this hostility found expression in Daniel LeLeon's wistful effort to organize "Socialist Industrial Unions." The IWW was a much more practical—and for a time more promising—expression of the same wish.

The intellectuals' expectations, however, were probably never higher than they were for the CIO. Young radicals especially jumped on its bandwagon—and the Old Left (after some early hesitation and vacillation by the official Communist party) flocked to its support. But the CIO leadership never made revolutionary claims. While from the beginning its goals were more explicitly social and political than those of the old AFL, CIO leaders wanted simply to reform the system and make it more responsive to the needs of workers. They were almost universally New Dealers, believers in the welfare state—and they quickly and almost unanimously rejected John L. Lewis, their most effective spokesman and leader, when he departed from that philosophy to move to the Right.

Yet they never unfurled the banner of revolution, nor even of democratic socialism. They simply organized badly exploited industrial workers into trade unions. The radicals who had dreamt of a revolutionary CIO as a vanguard of the working class, a cutting instrument in history's "inevitable" march to socialism, turned away in bitterness when the CIO opted for a practical but tough program of reform.

Many young New Leftists who influence black responses seem to think they have come upon an entirely new analysis of social events when they speak of the corruption of the workers who have become "part of the system." Actually, the intellectuals' contempt for the worker is as old as Aristotle, and the history of their intermittent war against trade unionists goes back to the middle of the 19th century. From that heritage, cherished in some left-liberal circles, the workers emerge as the chief enemies of black aspirations.

Some observers have seen the conflict between intellectual and worker as the prime cause of recurrent schisms in labor and radical movements. In *Rebels and Renegades*, a valuable and neglected book, Max Nomad argued that many important divisions in the European radical and union movements could be traced to this source. In the United States, Selig Perlman, in his influential *Theory of the Labor Movement*, suggested that unions would flourish only if workers subdued the intellectuals who tried to influence them. Labor's struggle "against the intellectual who would frame its programs and shape its policies," Perlman wrote, is of "equal importance to the struggle against employers."

Among workers, this antagonism shows itself in hostility to Egg Heads and Long Hairs. Many unionists distrust intellectuals,

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even as, paradoxically, many are far too respectful of the professor and the expert. The two reactions are sometimes combined in the same person, as in the business agent who hates all "Long Hairs" but stands in awe of the academician who troubles to cultivate him.

In the war between unionists and intellectuals, I tend to be a double agent. Though I hold all the proper union credentials (activity in local unions, organizer, negotiator, shop committeeman, local union president, elected convention delegate, etc.) and lack all the academic merit badges (high school diploma, college degree, etc.), I am nevertheless regarded as a Long Hair by some unionists, perhaps because I read books. Traveling in both union and intellectual circles, I go in a kind of crouch rather like a big-league catcher as a means of avoiding the high hard ones thrown from both sides.

Intellectuals bemoan the anti-intellectualism of workers and unionists, though workers often are simply giving back what they get. Workers are lectured for their foolish voting behavior. Their "racist" and authoritarian attitudes. Their manners, taste, and style are mocked even by those who have tardily found merit in the workers' preferences for country music and rock, Johnny Cash, Laurel and Hardy, Durante —even Chaplin.

Workers' children are virtually excluded from elitist schools and universities. They see their kids drafted for service, wounded and killed in Vietnam, while the children of the radical-liberal middle class escape into the university sanctuary.

To workers, the language of the professional priest-crafts seem designed to exclude them; and many know from experience that an encounter with an intellectual is likely to end in a humiliating put down. In short, anti-intellectualism among workers, while unfortunate, is not wholly unjustified.

All this would have no more than academic interest, except that the mutual distrust has harmful consequences. Cut off from social scientists, for example, unionists deny themselves useful knowledge about organization and communication theory, or about voter motivation and behavior in election campaigns. Scholars could help develop solutions for economic problems that puzzle union leaders. They could contribute their knowledge of systems analysis and the uses and misuses of computers to unionists who wrestle with administrative problems that seem unmanageable.

More important, the best of the intellectuals are moved by an openness of spirit and mind, a feeling for libertarian and democratic traditions. Unionists would profit from exposure to such men, as in less prosperous times they once did.

Unions have been blind to their identity of interest with the intellectual community, just as they have often been blind to the justified claims of black people. Because of their fear of the "Long Hairs," union leaders have often failed to oppose, and sometimes even joined in, campaigns of intellectual repression. They have not seen that when a society closes down on the nonconforming social critic, it may throw the union agitator in jail next. They need look no further than the South for evidence of that, or to Joe McCarthy and Barry Goldwater, stalwart enemies of unions and "Egg Heads" alike. Certainly George Wallace, combining slick anti-unionism with hatred of the intellectual, should have illustrated the point.

But many intellectuals seem no more perceptive than the more insensitive among union leaders. They might be expected to see that a nation where workers are atomized and powerless, as they would be without strong unions, is not likely to provide a congenial setting for the serious social critic. Accepting still another cliché, some intellectuals think the argument irrelevant anyway, since unions and the "working class" (so they believe) are withering away in the face of technological advance. Actually, the nearly 20 million workers em-

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ployed in manufacturing at the end of 1968 exceeded by about 3 million the number employed when the last census was taken in 1960. The total number of production workers alone reached 46 million, and most of them are eligible for union membership. The number of union members, while down as a percentage of the work force, has risen in absolute numbers to a record of nearly 18 million, and the fastest growing unions (Federal workers; Teachers; State, County and Municipal; Teamsters) are organizing in services that are rapidly expanding. Unions and workers are relevant and will remain so for many decades to come.

We ought to stress that unions and left-intellectuals share many common social and political goals. Major social reforms have been won when the two groups found reason to cooperate—in support of FDR and JFK and opposition to Goldwater, for instance—and not much good has resulted when the two have fired away at each other while the Right shelled both with triumphant impartiality.

Intellectuals will say "Unions are mostly wrong on Vietnam." That's not a point to be passed over lightly. But important as it is, *the war is not the only issue*, certainly not when there is the threat of internal disaster.

In recent months cooperation between the Left and the many unions that opposed ABM might have swung the one precious senatorial vote needed to defeat the Pentagon on that issue. And what a fall that might have been! Vigorous endorsement by the Alliance for Labor Action of the October 15 Vietnam Moratorium should have given some hope to all but the most sectarian of the New Left. The UAW, the Teamsters, and other unions have taken strong stands against the war.

I HAVE little hope for the nation unless the deep rift between labor and the intellectuals begins to heal. That division, I believe, helps to create conflict between black and white workers, the poor and the nearly-poor. Is it paranoid to believe, as I do, that the theoreticians of the Nixon administration (the Mitchell-Phillips coterie) hope to promote this division and to make political capital by isolating the organized white working class?

Despite the widely propagated and easily accepted mythology, American workers continue to have a real stake in social change. Most of them are badly housed, in grimy neighborhoods or crackerbox subdivisions. The schools their children attend are nearly as bad as the ghetto schools. Higher education is inaccessible to most of them. They are discriminated against in the draft, and are more likely to be sent to combat areas, to be wounded, and killed. Though they are more likely to suffer serious illness, decent medical care is beyond their reach.[3] In old age, they are still likely to live a threadbare existence. They suffer most from the lack of adequate public transportation. Many white union workers, often alongside black workers, are employed in demeaning, dangerous, or health destroying occupations. The staggering number of injured and killed at work is rising every year. They carry a disproportionately heavy and unfair share of the tax burden. They suffer periodic lay-

[3] The mythology of the privileged worker extends to this area as well as to others. Life span is related to income. Not only do Negroes live fewer years than whites, but workers live fewer years than the well-to-do. In a study of its own employees, Bell Telephone recently discovered to its surprise that the "hard-driving executive, living under constant tension" was less likely to suffer heart disease than an hourly-rated worker. Workers are more likely to suffer pulmonary disorders and other illnesses, and more likely to be afflicted with mental illness, but much less likely to be treated by a psychiatrist. Some unions, including the UAW, have rather recently won insurance to provide psychiatric treatment for workers, but the amount of care is limited measured against the population, and the number of workers covered is relatively small. The fact that almost all health indices show direct relationship between health and family income is another bit of American reality from which much of the intellectual community has sheltered itself.

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offs and short work weeks—as once again the Republican policy of fighting inflation by encouraging unemployment is applied. The young workers who are trying to get a family started are being crushed by high interest rates.

Political programs speaking to these needs could unite large sections of the white working class with those members of minority groups to whom they also appeal. Unionists and intellectuals can find common ground in such programs, and in the process may come close enough to make mutual exchange of views and sentiments possible.

A friend assures me that non-New Left radicals and liberals are simply unaware of, rather than hostile to, unions. The politically aware can hardly fail to know of the existence of unions, though they may not appreciate their power and potential. Much of their ignorance may result from the failure of unions aggressively to publicize their work. Little is known, for example, about labor's lobbying activities on domestic issues in Washington, even though, from the Left view, it is almost always on the side of the angels. Those close to the scene know, for example, that union power was central in the campaign to keep Haynsworth and Carswell off the Court. Roy Wilkins and others in the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights publicly paid that tribute.

Unions played a similar key role in campaigns for reapportionment, tax reform, welfare improvement, expansion of education, improved public health, expanded medical research—but without attracting much attention or applause from the Left.

Union efforts to bring their activities to public attention sometimes run into what looks to us like a conspiracy of silence. The last statement Walter Reuther issued on behalf of the UAW—an attack on Nixon's Cambodian venture and the massacre at Kent State—was not mentioned in any important news media until after his death, and then only in the *Chicago Sun Times.*

Speaking for the UAW, Leonard Woodcock appeared at the annual meeting of General Motors stockholders to support portions of the minority stockholder's report, but his statement was virtually ignored outside Detroit. The following day he traveled to Atlanta to join Ralph Abernathy at the head of a parade protesting the shooting at Jackson State. The *New York Times* carried a lengthy front page story on the march, but Woodcock's name was not even included in the list of those who "also spoke." UAW statements condemning the shootings at Jackson State and the hard-hat demonstrations have likewise been ignored.

I don't doubt that other unions get similar treatment in the news media when they speak out on issues of concern to the Left. In general, the good things labor does are ignored and the bad things are dramatized. The Left and Left-leaning journals, for example, are likely to feature every real or imagined union failure on civil rights. How much coverage has been given, for example, to growing opposition in the AFL–CIO Executive Council to George Meany's Vietnam policy? Or to actions of the State, County and Municipal Workers, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and a large number of important local unions and leaders in opposition to the war? How many DISSENT readers have heard of the Labor Peace Assembly that rallied large numbers of trade unionists opposed to the war more than two years ago?

Much of the failure to break through is probably due to the contempt many union leaders have for the Left. Some of them are narrow-minded, even bigoted, about their potential allies on the Left; but most, I believe, are simply defensive and wary of put-downs and college-bred jargon. Personally I don't know a single union leader who doesn't respect "people with brains." Hence attorneys, arbitrators, and some economists have been extremely influential in union circles. Unionists were very proud of their associations with Adlai Stevenson, once they

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knew he was no snob. Paul Douglas is almost revered by unionists in Illinois; Hubert Humphrey is not injured by the unionists' awareness of his past academic associations; and Harvard did not hurt JFK's standing with workers—on the contrary.

In view of the unionists' marked preference for enlightened and educated advisers and political candidates, I find it difficult to put all the "blame" on them for failing to reach out to intellectuals. I think some serious effort by young leftists to learn more about unions is clearly needed.

It is difficult to make this statement without seeming too defensive in respect to workers and unions. I am, after all, inextricably tied in with their history and fate. I am not a dispassionate observer. Still, I am close enough to see real flaws in both—the record of racial exclusion in some unions, the Wallace, racist, and extreme law-and-order sentiments among a significant minority of workers, the hard-hat lunacies. In fact, the closer we get to people, the more faults and imperfections we see. That, also, is a key to factional bickering on the Left.

But—on what I believe is the more objective side—I have also seen blacks and whites work together more effectively in unions than anywhere else in our society, and I have seen blacks rise to a sense, and a state, of real power in unions.

Black and white workers need each other. Black workers need unions. Unions need the good will and interest of intellectuals. And intellectuals need both workers and unions if they are to function creatively in a sane society.

The young and the black, beginning with little or no knowledge of unions, have taken their cues from the Left intellectuals through whom so many of them get their first exposures to radical thought. I enter no plea that intellectuals' criticism of unions be muted, only rather that the criticism be paralleled by more realistic statements of their record and potential.

On Free Speech — for Right and Left

We excerpt a few paragraphs from a document that was distributed to students last October by Professor Norman Birnbaum of the Sociology Department at Amherst College.

"In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. In a nation in which an Agnew pretends to have a political philosophy, a functional illiterate like Jerry Rubin may well strike some as a latter-day incarnation of Hegel's world spirit. Under the injunction 'Do It,' an anonymous group at Amherst has called for the disruption of a meeting scheduled this evening at Mt. Holyoke College, at which four officials of the Justice Department are scheduled to meet with students and faculty to discuss the Department's policies. With the call to disruption, the American Right may well be satisfied: it now confronts a Left as cretinous as itself. . . .

"There are matters of principle at stake. Our universities have been a privileged area for critical discourse in American society—the only such area. We have been able to claim this privilege by appealing to the liberties of speech, assembly, and teaching, prescribed by the Constitution. The maintenance of these freedoms is the precondition for the emergence of any mass movement of critical thought in this country, and therewith a precondition for any new politics. Marx himself had a high appreciation of the political value of political liberty. The Justice Department is contemptible, but its spokesmen have a right to be heard. My own suit against Mr. Mitchell [having to do with the Attorney General's refusal to grant a visa to a Marxist from abroad who had been invited to speak at Amherst] rests on certain essential principles: I cannot claim these for myself and my students and deny them to our political opponents."

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Sonya Rudikoff

Trashing Patriarchy

THE APPEARANCE OF *Sexual Politics* * constitutes an event in publishing rather than in intellectual history. Much of its material and general drift is not only familiar, but even tired; it offers no new research, argument, or proposals, nor is it an imaginative essay like the famous ones of Virginia Woolf and Simone de Beauvoir, nor a valuable investigation, like *The Captive Wife* by the late Hannah Gavron. What is only too clear in the year 1970 is the need felt by the publishing world for precisely this book on the women's issue, a "radical," "outspoken," "fearless," "uncompromising," "forthright," "militant" book, which "confronts" the facts of women's "exploitation." Other books are being issued, in hard-cover and paperback, even a children's book about feminism! Miss Millett herself speaks of the "relatively uncharted, often even hypothetical territory" of her concern, of the "ambitious, often overwhelming" task. She does not say why she was compelled to undertake it, but she seems to believe the effort was unique and difficult. Other media have cooperated in the assessment to make this into a full-fledged publishing event—the author photographed in the Women's Lib demonstration, eluding reporters like a celebrity, lecturing everywhere, even trying to explain the evils of patriarchy to Martha Deane!

As for the book itself, the argument pursues the history of patriarchal society in its subjugation of women; centuries of oppression are followed by a period of reform and sexual revolution between 1830 and 1930, to be succeeded by a counterrevolution that all but destroyed the previous advances and still dominates the present. This history and its details emerge from a perspective determined by the title and its all-embracing idea: the relations of men and women are seen as political in essence, as is the relation of women as a class to the rest of society. Like blacks, colonials, Untouchables, the proletariat, and other low-caste groups, women are exploited, oppressed, manipulated, and controlled for the benefit of the ruling class—in this case, the male masters. Relations of individual women and men, of women with one another, and of larger social groupings are to be seen against this background of power politics in the most fundamental sense.

Miss Millett is fascinated by the intricacies of the psychology of power; what she takes as *the* meaning of politics is the way the psychology of power is expressed in ideology. By close examination of texts, by unremitting, exhaustive, dogged pursuit, she uncovers the sexual polemics in the nineteenth century's self-conceptions. Engels plays the part of Virgil during this journey through the bleak forests of patriarchal history, until he is replaced by Genet, the French writer, homosexual, and former convict. No one needs to be reminded that patriarchy didn't begin with the Victorian age but long long before, with the wheel and stone implements; and before patriarchy, there may have been matriarchy! Miss Millett's interest is largely Victorian, however; and, although there are capsule histories of the suffrage movement, primitive practices, legal inequities, statistical material on industrialism, blacks, and work-

* Sexual Politics, by Kate Millett, Doubleday & Co. 393 pp. $7.95.

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ing-class women, Miss Millett's real subject is the *ideology* of patriarchal society in its Victorian manifestations. She makes no attempt to report on social fact, nor to present the results of any social analysis or investigation, and no original research into women's consciousness was undertaken. Miss Millett's own contribution is tirelessness, heavy irony, a mocking, derisive, often brutal style of comment, a habit of tendentious paraphrase, and an addiction to *ad hominem* argument that is so "fearless" as almost to invite legal scrutiny.

The study began as the author's doctoral dissertation at Columbia; its tone and level of discourse and evidence represent a departure from generally accepted academic practice that perhaps explains the uniformly favorable reviews. The book has been reviewed almost entirely by men, although the one female reviewer I've read agreed that the author was "frank," "brilliant," "loving," and so on. Statements so contrary to fact must mean *something!* What can it be? Miss Millett says primly, "I have operated on the premise that there is room for a criticism which takes into account the larger cultural context in which literature is conceived and produced," but such somnolent ambition would not wake the echoes of the Hudson Valley. The book opens with three intentionally shocking passages, from Henry Miller, Norman Mailer, and Jean Genet, which are used to illustrate the power alignment in sexual encounter. Throughout her discussion Miss Millett quotes at length from writers who describe sexual activity and feelings in an explicit vocabulary which used to be proscribed but is now commonly displayed. Still, when anything at all can be said, in print, in public, in private, nothing formerly thought shocking can be expected to shock; in fact, reviewers are used to it to the point of torpor. Perhaps, then, it is the new mixture, the use of this familiar material to frustrate, deny, and extirpate sexual interest in the reader, rather than to excite it, as pornography does. And the violence of the material, matched by the author's deliberate violence in using it, creates an effect that is automatically welcomed by the liberal culture around us.

MISS MILLETT IS MORE INTERESTED in ideology than anything else and thus refuses to react directly to the scatological material she feels obliged to quote; like a doctor uncovering disease, or a moralist sin, she attempts her therapy with a dispassionate stance. Only ideology rouses her passion, and she moves to personify abstract forces with Hegelian audacity: "patriarchy" acts, advances, retreats, schemes, recovers, quite as if it were a person, as do "the ruling group," "the male oppressors," and the rest. These are the actors in a grand historical process which uses the nineteenth century, uses Freud, uses D. H. Lawrence, Miller, Mailer, and all other events or people as its locomotive roars toward the second sexual revolution. Nazi ideology, Communist ideology, Victorian, Freudian, modernist ideology of sexual liberation, "new conservative" ideology of the fifties, the ideology implied in sociology, social psychology, in statistical method, in the study of primates —pages and pages are devoted to the ideological analysis of ideology, indeed I should say the polemical analysis of ideology, buttressed by mockery, heavily ironic paraphrase, selective quotation. The method is employed especially in the analysis of Freudian theories about female sexual temperament, and of post-Freudian ideas and psychological research. Freud and the Freudians are searched and sacked as if they were enemy towns; any theory qualifies as a belligerent if it suggests that female sexuality and behavior are in some important sense linked to or determined by biological, physiological sexual nature, rather than culture and learning; and no matter how the theory is qualified, or however supported by whatever sort of evidence. Miss Millett is tireless in tracing theoretical position to polemical will, and in seeing everyone but herself as culture-

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bound. In fact, all that we have come to associate with sexuality seems to be taken by Miss Millett to be merely learned behavior, with the hint that such learning is of very recent date, and would be easily reversible if the male oppressors were not in charge!

Miss Millett's examination of psychoanalytic theory is not distinguished either for probity or accuracy or for breadth of understanding, and is so obviously polemical that it is not worthy of serious discussion. Furthermore, all of Miss Millett's criticisms of Freudian theory have already been made, by Freudians themselves, even the questioning of androcentrism and phallocentrism, by Ernest Jones, Gregory Zilborg, and others —and far enough back to be in Miss Millett's bibliography had she cared to be serious. Instead, she fulminates against Freud, throws out hints about Marie Bonaparte's sex life, compares Erikson with the baboons, calls Talcott Parsons a quaint antique, and even seems to question the integrity of such scholars as Orville Brim. Freudian analysts are not the only lackeys of the counterrevolution: social psychologists are in league with them, and sociologists too; methodology is impure, research is tainted, everyone is on the barricades or up against the wall.

Why should Miss Millet have felt the need to "confront" psychoanalysis and the social sciences? What weight for their ideology concerning women does this confrontation imply? A very great deal, it seems, as, in our modern way, we endow scientific hypotheses with moral meaning. Psychoanalysts especially have been charged with general life guidance and moral authority; that the claim is both made and honored is a fact often noted, and usually it is linked with certain facts about the decline of religion. In this country, as we know, psychoanalysis has been embraced with more enthusiasm and credence than anywhere else; a similar effect, power, and notoriety would be surprising, or inconceivable, in the same circles abroad. Here it very much supplants that store of general knowledge, feeling, custom, and understanding, which is distinctive in older societies, all the natural feelings about what is important and how life should be lived, and how men and women should be. In America, from the very beginning, there was a bleakness, a harshness about the emotional landscape, and at a time when new demographic and social patterns were being revealed. Put differently, it was that same natural feeling, that authority, that achieved sense of life, which was rejected by all of our ancestors in order to come here, and which is repeatedly rejected, in every generation, by those who wish to embrace the liberal and ostensibly liberating culture.

Psychoanalysis is a major part of that culture, and Miss Millett could have confronted one of the important questions of the day, but the ideological demon pursues her in another direction, and so she ignores an interesting opportunity. The ostensibly liberating culture has in it possibilities for unforeseen rigidity and restrictiveness, which are the more damaging because they are unexpected and hidden; attitudes toward female sexuality and temperament suggest some of these ambiquities, but Miss Millett reacts blindly. There is no doubt that psychoanalytic insight is often used for hostile and destructive purposes; nor is there any question that some moral or spiritual aptitude would normally be expected of anyone acting as a guide or mentor, and that that aptitude is a gift rarely found. Nor should we think that "how to live" is for us easier or more difficult than it was for Tolstoy, or for our forebears way back in more shadowy patriarchal history. When the feminists make Freud their target, a kind of chief modern Satan, they are registering dimly the fact that something is wrong, but they are too caught up in belligerence to see the general cultural problem. That would of course require that men be seen as victimized too by the mythologizing of science. But *that* kind of equality may be too revolutionary for the feminists.

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AT LEAST A THIRD of Miss Millett's book, and clearly her favorite part, is the confrontation with "the counterrevolutionary sexual politicians themselves." The plot thickens: who will the villains turn out to be? Dear Reader, relax—it's only D.H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, and Norman Mailer! One might have expected to find master strategists who command larger constituencies, or who act on a more prominent stage, who have been engaged in some way other than being chosen as representative spokesmen in the ideological polemics surrounding the sexual question. Then, too, most of the world's, and the West's, female population is unaffected by the views of these spokesmen, probably even unaware of their very existence. Lawrence and Miller certainly are a part of the liberal culture, or what the liberal culture wanted to protect and defend, although they are canonical by now, and Mailer has become part of the culture he was trying to affront. Surely, it is worth noting that those representative spokesmen should reveal themselves to be more programmatically violent, "sexist," "exploitative" toward women than those whom the liberal culture would not defend, even as it liberates women; but Miss Millett chooses not to discuss this. She is more drawn toward adumbrating the connections between sex and violence, dirt, evacuation, murder, triumph, ordinary aggression, simple and complex brutality, and the network of power in which these themes appear in the writing of the "counterrevolutionaries." Given her great concern with arbitrary social roles assigned by patriarchy, it is not surprising that her attention is captured by homosexual relations. Genet is thus assigned a crucial position in the landscape, because the homosexual world is seen as a parody of patriarchal sexual relations. Consequently, it can expose the factitious character of the sexual polarities upon which patriarchy depends for its strength. When homosexual preoccupations with power and status are shown to caricature the sexuality we have all been led to believe is immutable, this seems to Miss Millett a convincing argument against it! Genet's message of revolutionary transformations of sexuality is what she chooses to end with. Beyond Genet: that is to be the direction. The second sexual revolution is ahead of us, led by women who because of their great alienation, their oppression, and their numbers, form the largest revolutionary base in society. The revolution is to be a cultural one, in both method and goal—sexual consciousness must be changed in order to achieve it, and, at the same time, the goal is a changed sexual consciousness.

Is that all? Nothing more specific? more definite? more revolutionary? It isn't much to go on, for longer than a demonstration or a book. Indeed, after such mockery, so much indictment, such analysis and explication and probing of attitudes, of implications, of ramifications, and reverberations of sexual attitudes of whole societies, throughout all of hideous patriarchal history—to come away with nothing more than "changed consciousness" is a bit of a swindle. Even if changes in social relationships can be accomplished only after a change in consciousness, there still must be specific matters for the consciousness to be conscious *about,* and Miss Millett hasn't much to suggest. Despite her boldness of attack, her deliberately liberated use of the colloquial sexual vocabulary, her self-designated "ambitious" and "anomalous" undertaking, she is not at all radical, but, like many contemporary feminists, and many contemporary "radicals," her radicalism is confined to language and posture, to ideology; the radical change alluded to is one of consciousness primarily, as in Charles Reich's ruminations. Anyone who has read Miss Millett's book with moderate care would have difficulty discovering political or social ideas in it; indeed, most of the rhetoric of feminism is similarly innocent of ideas. In their place is a good deal of understandable animus, a lot of vindictiveness, incessant historical recapitulation, recourse to the statistics of oppression; the feminist activities

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involve "rap" sessions, decorative demonstrations, invasion of offices, and, in journals like *Rat,* and elsewhere, lurid confessional material documenting the pernicious effects of male oppression. But there seems to be little beyond the defensive and reactive ideology, which may account for feminism's failure to appeal to black women, working-class women, working women too busy to spend time tracking down "sexism," or older women.

Miss Millett is very pleased with herself for identifying the sexual relation as *political,* but then is unable to develop the idea because by *politics* she means only the power relations of oppressor and oppressed, or master and slave, that is, the politics of control. She is not at all concerned with more functional aspects of politics, the organization of power for certain purposes, even irrational ones. She finds the analogy with racism to be most revelant to her argument, ignoring the involved power network in which racial groups operate. I suspect that she would be unable to analyze, in political terms, what happened to the Equal Rights Amendment in Congress this year.

WHAT, THEN, DOES SHE PROPOSE? For, we surely need something more than this review of ideology, which repeats so many earlier efforts, such as Simone de Beauvoir's, and far less brilliantly. Oh, there is a suggestion, not quite a proposal, more like a hinted fantasy, that the patriarchal family be abolished, but the fantasy doesn't go so far as to replace it with any other arrangement. This hint is worse than absurd, and flirting with it is irresponsible. Other proposals that lend themselves to more realization are not entertained by Miss Millett or other feminists. Sexual relations are not scrutinized for possibilities of reform, motherhood and child-rearing are virtually ignored, implications of extended or communal living arrangements not followed out, and women's education or vocational lives don't receive attention. Miss Millett was of course under no obligation to go further than ideology, but I would have thought she'd surely want to.

Given the feminist views of sexual life, it is surprising that none of them suggests even half-seriously the adoption of a Lysistrata policy, that is, using sexual power for political ends. Although variants of it have certainly been employed with notable effect on an individual level, and for purely private ends, it has not been made a political policy by the ostensibly revolutionary class or by their self-proclaimed vanguard. I wonder why not, considering the ready achievement of power such a policy might ensure, and the natural class interest which would support it. Perhaps it is too revolutionary! Nor is there any other sort of sexual policy proposed, although Miss Millett is pleased to note the Masters and Johnson sexual studies, which seem to indicate a female sexual capacity far greater than the male's. Group marriage? a reversal of the double standard? This also seems too delicate a subject for the feminists. A policy of deliberately using the power of sex to achieve other ends—like peace!—would be ideologically unacceptable because it has to acknowledge "sexism," even if only as political reality. A new sexual morality based on the ostensibly insatiable female sexuality would have to acknowledge inequality in a new disturbing way. So there is nothing very revolutionary offered about sexuality itself.

Motherhood and child-rearing are, of course, the vocational traps engineered by patriarchal oppressors, and are not to be taken seriously nor chosen freely. Need I add that the subject suffers from enormous neglect by feminists, who have yet to propose anything more original than free abortion, day-care centers, and sharing of housework. Ever since Plato, everyone who has thought about social change realizes that the subject of the education and rearing of the young is *the* significant revolutionary subject, and that if social transformations are to be at all dur-

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able, they must be expressed in changed institutions, in new sanctions, in new kinds of reinforcement, in redistribution of authority. How could this focus of revolutionary thought be missed by Miss Millett? It is not enough to attack law school admissions, or traditional sex and identity training, or to demand new consciousness; that is a kind of tokenism. What any serious person wants to now is, how is the change in consciousness to be maintained from age to age?

All societies have given thought to the care and training of the young. If they wish to perpetuate the existing society, they attempt to insure the transmission of knowledge and power. Whoever wishes to transform society must do more, must develop new social forms or use the existing forms to transmit in a changed way. In this country the problem becomes an especially difficult one because we create ourselves anew with each generation, so in a sense no social change can be durable, no commonly shared ideals can be assumed to remain powerful long enough to reinforce social change. Clearly, if children are taken from their mothers and brought up in crêches, schools, and day-care centers, they will be trained in a manner totally different than if educated in and by the family. But what will be the ideas and ideals of these educators and training staff, and what authority, what sanction, will they enjoy? And if their ideas shift with each group that graduates from the teachers' colleges, can the society trust its teachers to inculcate its ideals? We have alienated our older people, so they cannot be integrated into any system of coherent training, either for sanctioning what exists or reinforcing anything new, and they are not given the authority to supervise. No intelligent person feels he can delegate anything to the public schools, mistrust is everywhere. National ideals are chaotic and self-contradictory; the audible voices are cacophonous, social bonds are fragile, social institutions so discontinuous that no resonance can be assumed. Our schools do not reinforce our deepest social ideals, our mass media undermine our schools, our people do not support the idea of the nation, and an irreducible commercial vocabulary makes everything expendable.

If we compare this with the situation in the kibbutz, the Russian schoolroom, the Chinese collective, to mention only a few of the countless attempts to reeducate a society by strictly controlling the education of the young, we can see that in our own society we do not have available that enormous force of public social sanction, achieved at great cost, which forms the support for introducing and maintaining social change, and we have nothing comparable. (And none of these examples is entirely successful.) When feminists cite the innumerable women doctors and lawyers of Russia, they neglect to mention that the doctor's children have a very different, more rigid, inflexible schooling, that its form presupposes an earlier training of similar rigidity and control, that after school the children may be supervised by the doctor's old mother who lives with them and acts as concierge for the whole block of flats, exercising great authority accorded her by all the parents and the entire social milieu; that the children are obedient and responsible to a degree unimaginable in this country, that they have been accustomed to strict teachers whose authority is not undermined by parents, but rather supported; and that if these children turn on their television, they will encounter the same attitudes and ideals and sanctions shared to a large degree by the school, the camp, the club, the newspapers, the films, *and other people.*

Even bearing in mind the alienation and disaffection which we know to exist, the way this kind of social sanction is reinforced is quite unknown to us. We have nothing like it really, except perhaps in small isolated communities, or, fleetingly, in the sanctions observed in types of street life that Jane Jacobs saw before its decline. But there is little in our country that tends toward the creation of social bonds, only toward their dissolution, even in our liberal culture, so

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we cannot be sure that *any* reform, however desirable, that *any* revolutionary change, however necessary or rational, will be encouraged to flourish and grow, once its progenitors have disappeared from the scene, once another generation's personal destiny and its needs take precedence over what has gone before. The communal living groups which have sprung up in recent years dimly register the absence of such a continuous social environment, but they are too self-consciously unconnected with anything else in the society to be very durable themselves. And, lacking the kind of public sanction which the communal ideas enjoy elsewhere, they are forced to become internally far more authoritarian than anything ever attempted in the liberal "straight" society. The Manson case is most interesting in this connection, as are, too, the history of the innumerable utopian communities that have flowered and died in our country. Relevant here as well are the stories of the countless experimental colleges of the past and probably of the present too.

BEYOND A PERFUNCTORY NOD in the direction of socialism, the feminist argument has nothing to say about how the future is to be assured or invented, or about more intermediate social and economic measures to alleviate conditions until the revolution arrives. Why not, for example, a deliberate government policy of compensatory training and education for women, to make up for the defeating sequence of poor identity formation in childhood and consequent diminution of opportunity in youth and young womanhood? Some poorly informed women, perhaps inspired by the black churchmen, were led to attack the American Psychological Association and to demand millions of dollars in "reparations" for women whose possibilities had been stunted by psychology. Apparently not one of them realized that the APA was not the Ford Foundation! This may have been foolish and misplaced, but isn't there a need for something sensible? And revolutionary as well?

What really depresses and defeats a woman with professional goals and children who still need supervision, is not oppression of the master group, or discrimination, or patriarchical counterrevolutionary strategy, but simply the difficulty of meeting many responsibilities. If the children are to be cared for and helped and supervised in anything more than a custodial sense, if the household is to be maintained, with someone actually in charge, if the concept of "home" is to retain any significance, if the husband has any personal reality to the woman, if the job to be done or the education pursued makes any distinctive demands of its own, and if the physical environment and the health of everyone involved can be counted on—all of this requires executive talents, as well as available funds, energy, trained personnel who can exercise authority and be responsible enough to receive the power that is delegated, and so on. Most of the time these requirements are not met, and so the household is not maintained, or the children, like parcels, are merely delivered to sitters, or systematically brutalized by television and untrained custodians, or the woman's work or training receives minimal personal investment, or contact with the husband fades. Only a very clear relation to goals and a good deal of energy and cash make this workable. How much more difficult for those who start with a grave handicap, whether it is ignorance, inadequate training, confused goals, insufficient physical or financial resources!

A tax advantage to take care of household help or supervision of children would do more in this connection than passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, which, as a woman labor leader observed, flatters lady lawyers while it penalizes the working women who need the "unequal" protective legislation. Equal pay for equal work is an irreproachable goal, but if a women has never gotten into a position where she does equal

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work, the slogan isn't much good to her. But remedial programs of some sort, like the urban university programs for poorly prepared college students, emergency retraining programs, funds to compensate or supply tuition, family allowances with a different emphasis, a public education law comparable to the provisions enacted for returning servicemen —is there not an important task here, an appeal made to all who profess concern with women's lot?

Feminist obsession with the problem of equality precludes thinking along these lines, and unfortunately stands in the way of their making any valuable contribution to the improvement so earnestly desired. When equality is the goal, and the absence of equality is traced to cultural conditioning and oppression, this leads quite in the opposite direction from any useful political or social advance. It is a delicate question, but those who are fearless and uncompromising in their confrontation with other delicate subjects need not shrink from this one. For example, a very fearless attitude is required to insure that proposals to remedy the position of women are not decreed as unalterable law, that alternatives to them are seen as valuable also. And that at the very moment when training and the acquisition of higher skills are offered as a solution to women's age-old exploitation, the society's needs may be very different. What is the relation between the desire and presumed need for women's self-realization, and the social needs discerned from a different point of view? Some very fearless speculation is required. And, are the options to be increased or diminished? It seems virtually impossible for feminists to grant value to occupations, activities, or customs which concern women alone, so there is clearly some sort of impoverishment of possibility, not to speak of pleasure. Like the chief offenders of the patriarchal enemy, Miss Millett has only contempt for what women generally do, and her indictment of every historical version of the patriarchal family has blinded her to one of its important functions, often considered its great cultural contribution, that of being in effect the women's trade union. Feminist disdain has, for many women, interfered with the discovery that to take care of one's own children is not only necessary, and desirable for the children, but is as fascinating and rewarding as any research project, that managing an involved household is far more interesting than managing an office, that cooking or sewing require greater skill and provide more pleasure than planning curriculum meetings or figuring out stock options or dictating letters or writing up briefs or countless other tasks for which women are to be liberated. The doughy prose and the harsh, sour accusations tend to obscure anything very genuine in the experiences most women have. The point is not often made, perhaps because the true nature of things is always hard to convey: *les bonnes sentiments faisent la mauvaise poésie*. There may be a primordial ineradicable hostility between men and women; we are quite extensively informed about it. There may also be much of the truth of marriage and motherhood which has not been revealed, perhaps cannot be, possibly should not be, at least in writing.

Dear Reader, I do not recommend this book. In fact, its publishers would be performing a great public service if they were to withdraw it from circulation and donate the expenses of advertising, production, and editorial scrutiny to a fund for the education and training of disadvantaged women. Nothing would be more becoming to feminism than its silence. Enough damage has been done by contention to provide a reason for avoiding the further exacerbation of sexual conflict which attends the feminist argument. There has already been too much accusation, too much proof, too much history, too much revenge; too many relations embittered, too many natural impulses poisoned or frayed. Anyone who cares for human life and its continuance should refrain from further erosion of human feeling.

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Harvey Swados

Vanished Writer, Vanished Book

> . . . I cannot write otherwise than I do write. I am unable to, and I will not, even though I should want to violate myself; there is a literary law which makes it impossible to violate a literary talent—even with your own brain. . . . —*Boris Pilnyak, September 28, 1923*

FORTY YEARS AGO BORIS PILNYAK was recognized throughout Europe as "one of the giants of the modern novel," in the words of the dust jacket on his now-forgotten *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea.* At this point in time the phrase seems more a publisher's blurb than a just appraisal. I quote it that we may measure the distance traveled by Pilnyak between 1931, when Farrar & Rinehart published this work in Charles Malamuth's translation ("His books sell in the millions, the present literary generation considers him its master"), and 1938, when he was apparently shot in Moscow's Butyrskaya prison as "a Japanese spy." And in 1970, he remains—unlike his posthumously rehabilitated contemporary, Isaac Babel—practically an unperson, an unwriter in the land where he was once a literary star.

We do now have available in translation several volumes of Pilnyak's short stories. But his early avant-garde *The Bare Year* (published in this country in 1921 as *The Naked Year*), is long since out of print; and for the ordinary reader *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea* is almost as difficult to come by here, and as undiscussed, as in the Soviet Union. For this reason I am emboldened to write of an author whom I am unable to read in his original language. If Pilnyak is much spoken of in the literary and political histories of his time, it is almost always in terms of his early experimentalism, his stylistic dependence on Andrey Bely and Alexei Remizov (he dedicated "The Third Workshop" "To A. M. Remizov, in Whose Workshop I was an Apprentice"), his leadership—along with the bold and brilliant Eugene Zamyatin—of the All-Russian Union of Writers in the struggle against the vulgar Russian Association of Proletarian Writers, his humiliation during the Stalinist era, and his ultimate disappearance at the height of the great purges. Much is made of the circumstances surrounding the composition of *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea,* which are seen as either pathetic or degrading; but I am unaware of any serious commentary on the book itself.

Unquestionably, *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea* can be studied as a kind of casebook of literary equivocation, if not downright crawling, put together not so much from inner conviction as from personal weakness and ambition. Its real merits, however, are all the more remarkable when one takes into account the conditions attendant upon its appearance.

Pilnyak had gotten into hot water several

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years earlier with the publication of his story "Tale of the Unextinguished Moon," subtitled "The Murder of the Army Commander." Despite Pilnyak's denials, it had been all too clearly inspired by the death in November 1925 of Frunze, Trotsky's successor as Commissar for War; and it suggested that Stalin was responsible, if indirectly, for that death.

In 1929 he published in Berlin (for copyright reasons) a short novel called *Mahogany,* and was promptly assailed for having arranged with a White Guard publisher to print abroad a book considered unsuitable for Soviet readers—a charge with which a new generation of Russian writers has become all too painfully familiar. The charge was as baseless then as now, for as Pilnyak observed in a letter to the journal which had attacked him, "the books of my comrades in Soviet literature are published there: Andreev, Vera Imber, V. Kaverin, Nikitin, Romanov, Tolstoy, Fedin, and others, and I had found not one single name of an émigré author." The editor responded by calling this a "formal evasion," and Pilnyak found himself charged with being "an agent of the class enemy" and a criminal. His true crime had consisted not in publishing abroad, but in leaning toward Trotskyism, criticizing various aspects of Soviet life, and propounding a heretical critique of Marxism (about which more in a moment).

Responding to parallel attacks, Pilnyak's colleague Zamyatin withdrew with dignity first from the All-Russian Union of Writers and then from the Soviet Union itself ("I have been sentenced without trial," he wrote to Stalin in requesting an exit visa, "to what amounts, for a writer, to capital punishment —silence. . . ."). Pilnyak however undertook to square himself, and buckled down to the task of producing a politically acceptable novel. The result, incorporating substantial segments of *Mahogany* into a grandiose narrative of socialist construction, was *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea.* According to the historian Robert Conquest, the repellent Nikolai Yezhov, Stalin's creature and later head of the secret police (until his own downfall and disappearance), "personally oversaw the production, listing fifty-odd passages for amendment."

This effort, together with a number of other abasements, brought Pilnyak a certain temporary relaxation of the campaign against him; at least he was enabled to travel to the United States. There he was lionized by writers like Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis at a New York literary banquet, driven across the country by Joseph Freeman for more lionizing by Hollywood producers like Irving Thalberg, and enabled to acquire an American automobile. He returned to the Soviet Union with the car, and with the material for a put-down of his American experience, which he entitled *OK;* but in the end, of course, nothing helped, and degradation was followed by extinction.

ONE CANNOT HELP but feel that the largely adverse verdict of historians and critics on *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea* has been inspired to a considerable degree by the unheroic conduct of its author, and to a lesser degree by aspects of his method and style which in fact antedated his harassment by party hacks and thought police. Pilnyak was in the habit (not unique among modern writers) of reworking stories, of pillaging his earlier productions; if he can be castigated for converting *Mahogany* into *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea,* and for inserting crude paeans to the Party and assaults on Trotsky, he can also be saluted—at least by those of us who have not been subjected to such pressures—for insisting on retaining much of its thematic material. It was an insistence that may very well have contributed to his final downfall.

Two sets of brothers are principal characters in *Mahogany*: they remain such in *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea.* The brothers Bezdyetov are mahogany furniture

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restorers of Moscow who go to the backwater town of Kolomna and stay with Yakov Skudrin, an old peasant representative, whose brother Ivan, "a half-mad idealist expelled from the Communist Party," lives nearby in an underground dugout. The Bezdyetovs

> were devoted to the art of antiquity and anonymity. . . . This art continued to be the business of nameless individuals, of cellars in towns, of wretched serfs' quarters in the huts of the manors, of bitter vodka and of the cruelty of loneliness. . . . When serfdom, which nurtured this art, was abolished, furniture factories replaced the masters who were serfs. But the nephews of the masters —through vodka—remained alive. These masters construct nothing new. They merely restore the antiques; but they have preserved the habits and the traditions of their uncles.

If the symbolism of these figures is fully obvious, that of old Communists like Ivan Skudrin is scarcely less so. In a time of exhaustion and venality, Ivan is an extraordinary reminder of the revolutionary vitality that had swept everything before it—and that is now an encumbrance to Stalinist consolidation.

"In the year twenty-two," Ivan explains, "I was kicked out of the party for drunkenness. . . . However, I am a communist. . . . Our first revolution, the Bolshevik, the October one, was a social revolution; then came the second revolution, the cultural one. What we want is a revolution of honor, of conscience, that all may become honest; otherwise, we shall perish."

When he troubles to, Pilnyak can be as physically pungent as the earlier masters of the Russian novel. He describes Ivan's old brother Yakov thus:

> For the last forty years or so, Yakov Karpovich suffered from a hernia, and when walking he supported this hernia with his right hand put through the seam rent of his trousers; his green hands were swollen with dropsy; he would put a lot of salt on the bread from a common saltcellar, crunch it, and then carefully put the remainder of the salt back into the salt box.

Despite the fact that Yakov's heretical theory, propounded in *Mahogany,* must have been one of the reasons for the storm raised by that book's publication in Berlin, Pilnyak persisted in including it in *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea.* It is worth quoting as an example not only of Pilnyak's persistence in clinging to his "errors," but of what may also be regarded as his prescience.

> "The theory of Marx about the proletariat [says Yakov] is rank nonsense and will soon be forgotten, because the proletariat itself is destined to disappear. . . . Revolution is to no purpose, it is a mistake made by history, a little mistake at our expense. Two or three more generations will pass, and the proletariat will disappear—first in the United States, in England, and in Germany. Marx expounded his theory at a time when labor was based on muscles, having decided that labor will be forever based on muscles. And yet it turns out now that mechanized labor is replacing muscles; soon engineers alone will remain to guide the machines, and the proletariat will be transformed into engineers. The machine is run by five men, and in the office there are forty; the office employees will become proletarians. . . ."

The engineers of whom Yakov speaks are the principal figures of *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea.* If they are carelessly introduced and cursorily characterized, if their life experiences are narrated in a disjointed and fragmentary fashion, if their chronology is maddeningly confused, this can be attributed only in part to their having been created, so to speak, *sur commande;* for this had been Pilnyak's mode of writing, in emulation of Bely's *St. Petersburg,* from the time of his earliest successes. If we trouble to disentangle the intertwined lives, it is because even the black and white traitors and patriots have incandescent moments in which they emerge, almost despite themselves, as creations of a writer of quality.

Old Professor Poletika, a Bolshevik Marx-

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ist, "a scientist with a European reputation, a great theoretician and a great practical man, a builder," is the hydraulic engineer supervising the design of a new channel, for which a monolith must be constructed near Kolomna to buttress and throw back the waters of the Oka and the Moscow rivers. "Professor Poletika, senile and professorially odd, never drove in automobiles and always went out in a frock coat." On the very next page, however, we are told that 25 years earlier he had been "a beardless engineer who had just graduated from the institute," which would indicate that he is now a senile old man of 48 or 49. And when this old man who never drives in automobiles arrives at Kolomna, "A Russian Nami [explained in a footnote as a new brand of Soviet automobile] took . . . Poletika to the monolith." Such slapdash carelessness seems always to have been present in Pilnyak's fiction, alongside a painstaking mosaic of interlocked themes and life stories.

LET US RETURN to the oddly intricate relationship among the engineers. Poletika, who had loved "only once in his whole life," had been married for 11 years to Olga, a movie-theater pianist, when she deserted him with their children in 1915 for Edgar Laszlo, tutor of their son (killed on the Western front later in the war). Laszlo subsequently becomes an engineer, and finds himself working on the construction of Poletika's monolith. He was "forever bound" to Olga, but

> was not physically faithful to his wife, like many men of that epoch, and just as many women were not faithful to their husbands. In freight cars, in sleepers, on a visit to various towns, on casual nights—for the everyday life of all was broken in those days and each one had at his back a zero at stake in the desperate game—were scattered women who did not impose any obligations, who gave joy with their femininity, which seemed to be eternal, which destroyed the zero that was ever-present. The conflagration of the revolution did not leave mental capacity for anything greater, and the women were lost at dawns and on new roads.

Laszlo has been involved for some three years in an affair with Maria, wife of a dedicated and heroic engineer, "risen from the workers," Fyodor Sadykov. "Maria Fyodorovna Sadykova loved Edgar Ivanovich, and she remained his mistress when he arrived at the construction site. Maria came with everything that was beautiful in her—to give herself up to him. She loved, her love treading the paths of classical music, without justifying herself, without thinking of justification."

When Sadykov learns of his wife's long-term affair, he calls her and Edgar Laszlo into his office: "We are building a new society and a new morality. It seems to me, Edgar, that there is no reason why we should quarrel. But you understand that I cannot allow any disrespect to my wife. Since you love each other, I propose that you should marry and dispense with unnecessary lies."

Shamed, Edgar returns to his wife Olga with the news. "Fyodor acted cruelly and honestly in accordance with communist morality. You can judge as you like. I cannot fail to accept his challenge. I cannot abandon a woman who has honestly given herself to me and whom previously I took in a way that was not quite honest."

Olga, who has had a daughter by Edgar as well as a grown daughter, Lyubov, by Professor Poletika, replies: "Tomorrow my daughters and I will leave you to save your honor, if this honor of yours demands that you should abandon your daughter and your old wife."

And her older daughter Lyubov cries out bitterly, "I am also a communist. . . . Your honor, Edgar Ivanovich, is the honor of a coward and a thief who is canonizing his theft."

In such wretched circumstances Edgar marries Maria, who soon becomes aware of the painful truth: "You don't trust me; I am a stranger to you. You needed me as a mis-

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tress, but I am not fit to be your wife. I have not read either Marx or Goethe; I cannot advise you; I am unnecessary to you. I wish I could trust you, yet I cannot and do not trust you, just as you do not trust me."

Edgar's plea, "We must love each other, do you hear? We must! We love each other, we are chained to each other—" does not persuade her; she hangs herself.

The death of Maria becomes "the symbol of Woman's destiny" to the female laborers of Kolomna, who had been living in squalid barracks for several years, and had been gossiping over the affair between Edgar and Maria:

> . . . in every women's barrack, assuming seventy-one women in each, there were seventy-one sorrows. . . . Women, made equal to men in civic rights, were not rendered equal in every-day life and were certainly not made equal by biology, once children are left to the care of the mothers. In the barracks were collected single women, old women over forty; from thirty to forty, widows with children; from twenty-two to thirty, old maids; up to twenty-two, young girls whose future destiny was to remain in these barracks. All these women's destinies were determined by the absence of men; and it was but natural that in such barracks sex quesitons were treated with intense interest, woman's fate being bitter and doomed to unhappiness.

When the women learn of Maria's death they take the occasion, in a scene reminiscent of Zola's *Germinal,* to demonstrate against rape, molestation, and favoritism. Edgar, who has followed Maria's coffin to her grave, is surrounded by "a hundred faces, copper and stone faces, that looked past him, as if he were a blank." Suddenly he is set upon by his serving maid, Darya.

> "Push him into the hole and send him to hell!" shouted Darya, and again struck him on the chest. . . . The women shouted, thunderously, terribly, and crowded toward the grave. The faces of the women ceased to be like copper or stone; they became human. The trees surrounded the grave in silence. The grave diggers hurriedly filled the grave, looking at the crowd with fear and anxiety. The dead woman was forgotten. Darya mastered her tears. "Comrades!" shouted Darya, stopped short and waved her red kerchief. "Comrade women! We are the organized proletarian women. Maybe the court will acquit him, but we, women, must live and build up our own life: we condemn him. It is for us to live, for us to judge!"

Pilnyak's nervous, disjointed report of the deprivations and personal agonies of technicians and working men and women, laboring together in dismal conditions on grandiose projects, oscillates erratically between the terrible and the ridiculous. If what I have quoted thus far seems to point more in the latter direction, I hasten to add that even when Pilnyak, a Russian nationalist and a basically unpolitical novelist, is composing a scene obviously skewed to follow political directives, certain of his true beliefs are apt to burst through, much as do curiously affecting moments in the commercial scenarios of hired writers who are better than hacks.

Fyodor Sadykov, the worker turned engineer, is a clockwork figure that could have been wound up for any of a dozen dishonest books about high-minded proletarians. Nevertheless, at key points in his marriage to Maria he comes to life (it is perhaps revealing that only in their sexual connection do most of Pilnyak's people acquire a texture of reality). Maria, we are told, "was of a type that possessed the greatest feminine force—namely, weakness." She is the daughter of an engineer; her parents had been killed during the civil war. After hiding in their cellar for a week she had come to the revolutionist Fyodor, her eyes vacuous. "Kill me too, if you like! I have nothing to live for," she says helplessly.

"She became the wife of Fyodor Sadykov. Fyodor took her because of death, from pools of blood at the front, just as newly born kittens unwanted by anyone are taken from cesspools by the scruff of their necks.

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Fyodor Ivanovich was what is called a coarse, unrefined man; he had his life's work mapped out for him by the revolution."

FAR MORE SIGNIFICANT in Pilnyak than such spontaneous reflections are the recurring appearances of the carefully rhythmical leitmotif, one of the stylistic devices he had borrowed from Bely. When he is ruminating on the fitful nature of the relations between the sexes as a necessary consequence of the revolution, he observes:

> The palm of a woman's hand placed on a man's eyes may sometimes conceal the whole world, not merely by the physical law of vision; it may so conceal the world that the palm becomes larger than the world itself; while the naked knee of a woman can possess the heart even as do thoughts of death under fire in battle, for not only are death and love zeros, but they are also equal to each other.

After Edgar has had to give up his wife Olga in order to marry his mistress Maria, Pilnyak reverts to the metaphor, in a new context:

> Every man knows of the happiness of possessing a woman and every man knows of the still greater happiness of possessing a human soul—a wife, her head, her hair, her voice, her words. . . . The palm of a woman's hand can shut out the whole world not merely by the physical laws of sight; it can shut out the whole world to such an extent that the palm of the hand becomes greater than the world. And at such hours Edgar Ivanovich was most intensely aware of the fact that Maria was of no use to him, not necessary to him.

In his last, climactic scene with Maria before her suicide, Edgar thinks:

> The wife Olga, with her face growing old, her hair turning gray, her warmth, her caresses, could force a human being to open his heart, and something beautiful dominated that which had given life to red-haired Leessa. The knees of a woman may be more majestic than Mont Blanc. The knees of Maria were stripped naked; they were the knees of a weak townswoman, almost a girl, and nothing more. . . .

Until now I have not so much as mentioned, in a novel that commences with a listing of 22 principal characters and 18 minor characters, the villain of the piece, who in his monstrousness stands astraddle its entire concept. Yet another construction engineer, Evgeny Poltorak, is first seen by the unworldly visionary, Professor Poletika, in the restaurant of the Great Moscow Hotel. And in the very first descriptive words we become aware of yet another of Pilnyak's symbolic themes, Russian duality, his people's destiny to face both the East and the West.

> Poltorak was dressed like a foreigner, but his cheekbones were defiantly Slavic. His blue coat was made not only for the eyes of strangers, but for the lordly comfort of its possessor. His parted hair shone with brilliantine. His index finger was decorated with a shining diamond in an old setting. It was precisely this ring that arrested the attention of Professor Poletika, who, only after examining it carefully, glanced at the perfectly courteous face of the engineer. Poltorak's eyes looked energetic, clever and precise, "and yet they are the kind no decent man should have," thought the professor. "He is right in concealing them behind the diamonds."

Pilnyak cannot let it go. He must point out that "Poltorak always evoked in Poletika a feeling of dirty stickiness."

Poltorak, the novelist informs us, "lived behind the trenches of history." The image might well apply not only to privileged engineers, but *a fortiori* to those Soviet writers who could manage, like Pilnyak himself, to produce work acceptable to their rulers. The itemization of Poltorak's worldliness in the materially deprived Russia of the twenties reads like an inventory of the luxuries with which "honored artists of the republic" have been suborned: Moscow cabarets, suppers,

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fox-trots, meetings at early dawn in the actors' circle, Saturdays at the Casino, Sundays at the turf, evenings at home with children who are taught English, maids in white apron and cap, carpets, bronzes, paintings, a "severe" telephone, wine, fruit, caviar, sturgeon laid out for guests on porcelain—and the recurring mahogany which serves to remind us of the scavenging Bezdyetov brothers, searching out the handicrafts of the old regime.

"Poltorak was ill," we are informed bluntly. Curiously, Pilnyak attributes the villain's "illness" not to his bourgeois origin, but to something brutally simple: "He was ill because of women, having unchained his instincts."

The catalogue of Poltorak's amatory adventures is punctuated with a leitmotif: "Poltorak knew well how the heads of women bend at the behest of lips, and how their eyes quiver under a kiss—how enfeebling words are uttered—how to lay his head on the lap of a woman, face down, baring her knees, when, beyond drunken shouts and whispers, conscience falls to pieces."

So he moves from his aging wife Sophia, "a tired and worthy woman," to his mistress Nadezhda to his wife's sister Vera, dying of tuberculosis in the Crimea; and to Lyubov Poletika, Olga Laszlo's daughter by her first marriage to Professor Poletika. Only Lyubov, the young Communist archeologist studying "the obscure history of those stone-women that are dug out of the ancient tumuli of the steppes," succeeds in resisting him because of her adherence to the principles of Communist morality.

"Poltorak wanted to believe that the girl was giving her time to those antiquities because of erotic mysticism," Pilnyak informs us, and promptly destroys the insidiousness of this evil revery with the hasty assurance: "nevertheless it was not true so far as Lyubov was concerned. Lyubov was digging into the ages in order to give them to the future."

If, atop this painful obviousness, we observe that Poltorak has successively betrayed Sophia (Wisdom), Vera (Faith), Nadezhda (Hope), and Lyubov (Love, or Charity), we may leap to the conclusion that Poltorak is simply comical, and in a way that Pilnyak hardly intended—particularly when we see the engineer's predictable but irrational hatred of the patient proletarians at a production conference ("He began to understand in anger that he was dependent upon these people"), his predictable but unmotivated acceptance of "English pounds sterling" from one Sherwood in a plot to blow up the dam, his predictable but absurd involvement finally with the half-mad idealist Ivan Skudrin in this plot, and his predictable murder by Ivan's older brother Yakov.

But we should be wrong. Pilnyak succeeds in investing Poltorak with a horrid Mephistophelian aura that touches everyone about him with a phosphorescent corruption. Particularly in the cases of Nadezhda and Vera, the erotic overtones, with their mingling of sex and sickness, are irresistibly reminiscent of similar decadent involvements in the novels of Thomas Mann—women dying of tuberculosis, or of cancer, whose sexual passion is heightened by the fetid breath of approaching death.

Poltorak leads Nadezhda to a hotel assignation in Kolomna through "corridors that smelled of mice and creosote, of disinfectant," to a room in which she announces,

> "With you I want to be the cynical European, the tourist—the kind who may do anything. You too may do anything now. . . ."
>
> Poltorak closed the shutters. The armpits of women smell of sealing-wax. And the room with its bastionlike walls that were sinking in the darkness stolen from the dawn, this room of a provincial hotel through which Russian provincials had passed, the morning, the kisses—all became the office of passion, very terrible, like all such offices of provincial rooms with hotel beds. European morality had forbidden third parties to reveal the secrets of these offices.

After Poltorak has met his fate, Nadezhda gets drunk at a party given by the Bezdyetov

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brothers, the furniture restorers, and tries "to play the part of an eighteenth-century marquise in alcohol." She rants on about the love affair of Sergei Yesenin and Isadora Duncan, and finally, drunken and naked, surrounded by mahogany, announces, "I don't know who's the father of my child, and it's utterly immaterial to me. I'm pregnant, and I shall not submit to an abortion. I'm not afraid of life. We're modern people. Nations perish, but I shall have a son of my own, born of the epoch . . ."

The next morning, Nadezhda goes to the doctor's office: "The doctor, washing his hands after examining the case, said to Nadezhda that she actually was pregnant, but that, moreover, she was ill with syphilis."

The seduction of his wife's sister Vera, however, is beyond doubt the most lurid of Poltorak's sins. His wife had pawned her watch and brooch to pay for his ticket to the Crimea, in order that he might go south and bring Vera home to die. When he arrives at Yalta, he meets the dying woman: "Aside from physical changes, she displayed also psychic changes, which suddenly excited Poltorak and pleased him."

On the night train from Sebastopol to Moscow he plays the attentive brother-in-law to the feverish Vera. "He unlaced her shoes, pulled off her stockings. And he felt the restless attack of his ailment, the one which he had contracted no one knows when."

"Like a skilled orator," he makes love to her. "Before the zero of death, everything is nonsense. Carnal love will remain until the zero comes; all the other truths are wrong, except this one."

Vera survives long enough to die in the arms of her sister, who sends her husband a telegram: "Vera just died both of us say be accursed you scoundrel."

ALL OF THIS is unashamedly operatic, but it is grand opera, as were many of the nineteenth-century Russian novels before Pilnyak, as was Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* after him. And Pilnyak does not hesitate to move from the pathetic particulars of Vera's life—"there was a girl Verochka, there was an adolescent gymnasya student Vera, there was a student at the Moscow Philharmonic, Vera Salishcheva, there was a middling actress of provincial theatres Vera Poleyaya," —to her apotheosis in flames:

> In the chamber of the crematory at a temperature of two thousand degrees Réaumur, in two minutes the coffin and human clothing burn up into nothing, and there remains only the naked corpse—and the naked human being begins to move; the dead man's legs bend under him, his hands crawl to his neck, his head is sucked into the shoulders. Should a living human being with broken nerves stand at this little window through which may be seen how two thousand degrees of Réaumur destroy a man, then the hair of this living human being would turn gray and the last human convulsions will seem to him to violate death. The dead man assumes shameless poses, and a quarter of an hour later only a handful of ashes remains of the man. . . .

When Pilnyak returns to this leitmotif in describing the cremation of Maria after her suicide, he converts the erotic element of the writhing cadaver into another configuration:

> A naked body remains and the naked man begins to move. These last human convulsions may appear supernatural, violating the laws of death, but they are subject to a strange law. The feet of the dead man are bent under him, his arms stretch toward his neck and then are crossed on his chest, the head is drawn into the shoulders; the man, before he passes into non-existence, assumes that pose which he had in his mother's womb, when he arose out of the same non-existence.

At the very end of their lives, Poltorak engages Edgar Laszlo in a lengthy conversation that is all but a monologue. It is difficult to imagine that Poltorak's fury-filled assault on life in the Soviet Union does not

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reflect in some degree those perceptions of the author which got him into such terrible trouble that he too, like his engineers Poltorak and Laszlo, wound up with a bullet in his head.

> "Have you ever noticed [reflects the doomed engineer] how our—yours, not mine and none the less ours—how our government regime is choking from roguery, flunkeyism, treason, moral dissolution. The government weapons are armies of controlling organizations. The people's commissariat of the workers' and peasants' inspection is a moral institution, just as those placards in the streets, on the stairways, in streetcars, in inns, in institutions: 'Beware of pickpockets.' 'Don't spit.' Don't smoke.' 'Pull the chain in the water-closet.' 'Don't lie.' 'Don't rape.' In my house on the stairway there's an inscription under the electric lamp: 'Thief, do not take the trouble of stealing the lamp; it is soldered.' And in Moscow they put up posters teaching people to act as stool-pigeons. 'Citizen! Your duty is to watch the taxpayer.' You see how the whole country is turned into a moral placard; the placards of morality have come out into the streets because there's nothing left of it in their so-called souls. In Russia, people are guilty by the mere fact that they are alive!"

If Boris Pilnyak deliberately set out to write a bad book in an effort to ingratiate himself and purchase at least a temporary personal security, it must be acknowledged that he was partially successful—and with a certain vulgar panache, hymning socialist construction with engineering data on problems of hydraulics, earth moving, and geology worthy of a Steinbeck. I would suggest however that *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea* can also be measured by the extent to which Pilnyak failed in this task. His failure —the voice of the artist cheating his paymasters, bursting through the braggadocio and the burlesque of Bolshevik realism—does him honor that should be recognized by us, if it cannot as yet be in his native land.

Even here, the final words should belong to Pilnyak himself, and to the tortured novel in which they glow:

> The shelves of years are like the shelves of books. The shelves of human years are like books, for every book is surely a human convulsion of human genius, of human thought breaking the law of death, striding across death, even like the convulsions in a crematory. Assuredly every man must—sometimes at night, when alone in his study among the shelves of books—every man must be horrified in the face of these books; must feel that every book is a counterfeit of real human life, every book is a convulsion of thought cheating death. . . .

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Bernard Rosenberg

On Crime and Punishment

WINSTON CHURCHILL ONCE SAID that the public attitude toward criminals constitutes "a sure test of the level of civilization." [1] If so, then these essentials of the liberal doctrine as set forth by Leon Radzinowicz should not be forgotten:

> Since law, and especially criminal law, placed restrictions upon individual freedom, there should be as little of it as possible. To prohibit an action unnecessarily increases rather than decreases crime. Moreover, it was not the function of the law to enforce moral virtue as such, but simply to serve the needs of a particular society. . . .
>
> As to the administration of justice: It was here above all that the rights of the individual had suffered most in the past and here that it was most necessary to build secure lines of defense against the encroachments of the State. . . . Presumption of innocence should be the guiding principle: the maxim, so fashionable at the beginning of the nineteenth century, that it is better that ten guilty persons escape than that one innocent man should suffer, tersely expressed this deeply felt concern.[2]

Men like Cesare Beccaria and Wilhelm von Humboldt (who believed that the evils occasioned by police regulations outweighed those they prevented) set forth a general position that not even its Western heirs can take for granted. This position declares that insofar as a society attempts to legislate sin out of existence, seeking thereby to govern private morals by criminal law, it reverses the historic trend away from tyranny. If this assertion is construed as a pure value judgment —which some of us view also as a demonstrable fact—no one need feel constrained to accept it. That the criminalization of many common acts helps to account for our crime problem is another matter.

THIS ARGUMENT has taken two contemporary American criminologists to a point where they see current police practice as the bearer of a serious totalitarian potential. Jerome H. Skolnick and J. Richard Woodward offer their empirical findings to underscore a real and present danger.[3] They know how easily the delicate legal fabric can be torn apart when law becomes the major device for imposing conventional morality. To a large extent the police, who are our official guardians of that morality, have been prevented from achieving full success, or total competence, by their very human limitations. Even now, it is impossible for them to be everywhere; nor are they argus-eyed agents of the conformist behavior that society theoretically demands.

The police have always needed to persuade, pay, threaten, or coerce informants to help them gather intelligence. Perfected or not, any system of surveillance and enforcement consisting solely of human contacts, is necessarily fallible. So long as we rely only on people for the production of incriminating evidence, most "immorality" goes undetected,

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[1] The reference is a famous one and appears, among many other places, in the concluding chapter of a book by John Barron Mays, *Crime and the Social Structure* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), p. 228.

[2] Leon Radzinowicz, *Ideology and Crime* (London: Heinemann, 1966), p. 2.

[3] Jerome H. Skolnick and J. Richard Woodward, "Bureaucracy, Information and Social Control" in *The Police*, David J. Bordua, ed. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), pp. 99–136.

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unprosecuted, and consequently unpunished. But as police efficiency increases, the crime rate looks more alarming, and totalitarian control draws closer. The puny human factor diminishes before an awesome technology.

Skolnick and Woodward draw our attention not only to new means for observing and recording transgression—hidden microphones, wiretaps, high-power binoculars—but also to the computerized and centralized information they supply. Data banks, with instant retrieval, which may include police, court, probation, school, welfare, and health records, are already underway.

Skolnick and Woodward address themselves to one small but paradigmatic situation in the state of California. There, statutory rape is an offense that occurs when a man has sexual intercourse with a willing girl, under the age of eighteen, who is not his wife. At the time of this study, no allowance was made if the male honestly and with reason believed the girl to be over the age of consent. Since a 1964 California Supreme Court decision, People *vs.* Hernandez, the defendant may plead that he mistakenly but in good faith took the girl to be eighteen years of age or older. The research is concerned with all statutory rapes reported in two jurisdictions: that of the Westville Police Department between January 1962 and October 1963 (a total of 235 cases) and, for comparative purposes, that of a nearby community, Mountain City, where 87 cases were reported for the year 1961. The population of Mountain City is larger than that of Westville. Nevertheless, for the period studied, more cases of statutory rape were reported in Mountain City than in Westville, where, for instance, 40 cases came to the attention of Westville police in 1961. Skolnick and Woodward explain this difference as the statistical artifact that it is. Available figures grossly distort both the incidence and the distribution of an offense whose actual magnitude we cannot know. Those in the upper and middle reaches of American society are not given to lodging complaints that would reveal the sexual indiscretions of their offspring. Parents from the lowest stratum of that society, though they may appear somewhat less reluctant, are also not overeager to act as complainants. Yet it is this stratum, and not only in a corner of California, that supplies most of the known-because-reported cases. If so, why the difference between Westville and Mountain City in numbers and in racial composition (67 percent Negroes compared to 22 percent)? More Negroes live in Westville, but not nearly enough to account for the disproportionate ratios. In a meticulous examination of the police process, Skolnick and Woodward reveal many pertinent details, and of these one emerges as decisive:

> The Mountain City family support division does not systematically report violations it discovers while taking welfare applications, and it is largely to this difference in policy that the different outcome is attributable. . . . As a result, many of the features of the Westville cases are lacking in Mountain City: fewer reporting persons wait until they are certain the girl is pregnant before reporting the offense . . .; offenses are reported more quickly . . .; and Negroes are involved in far fewer of the cases. . . .[4]

One agency in possession of facts otherwise unavailable to the public passes them on to another agency. If A tells B, and B—using its broadly discretionary powers of enforcement—decides to prosecute, nonvoluntary complaints are found, and statutory rape looks like a serious matter. Actual fluctuation in rates remains unknown and unknowable, but when information about welfare recipients is exchanged with police officials, a larger than ordinary number of these people will be included as offenders. Hence, for the record, poor men have a far greater propensity to commit acts of statutory rape than rich men. Where this reporting system has

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 111.

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yet to be adopted, the propensity is officially less pronounced. The system implies an increase in police efficiency which will be further facilitated by improved technology. It exposes much that would remain unexposed about the "wicked ways" of those in an affluent society who receive public assistance. Skolnick and Woodward conclude that the Westville policeman is significantly more successful than his Mountain City counterpart in locating "crime," not because of his superior skill nor his more rational administration, but basically because he taps welfare records.

These criminologists believe that for their kind of data, Philip Selznick has posed the most appropriate question, namely, "Do we need or want agencies of control so efficient and so impartial that every actual offender has an equal chance of being known and processed?" [5] Selznick's question answers itself in the negative. For a condition where every offender has an equal chance of being known and "processed" presupposes the politicization, criminalization, and totalitarianization of everything. We are some distance from that extremity. So far it is only a criminological nightmare that threatens to materialize as mechanical detection replaces merely human effort in order to maintain "law and order." If instant exposure and swift punishment followed the commission of all acts defined at this moment as violations of existing statutes, then our society would be nothing but an enormous prison.

Therefore, one cannot lightly dismiss either Selznick's disturbing question or his implicit answer. Yet we greatly doubt whether that question is quite the right one. Skolnick and Woodward have shown that consequential public policy can be set when welfare department records are transmitted by a family support division to police officials. Specifically created to uncover fraud and nonsupport, the family division may be instrumental in reporting crimes outside its sphere.

The authors ask us to consider what would happen if public policy of this sort extended into other institutional spheres. They offer public schools as an example: "Many acts routinely dealt with by school officials under the label of school discipline—petty theft, carrying of knives, assaults, sport 'pools'—could conceivably be reported to the police for criminal processing." [6] And so they are —not always, or the public schools would be depopulated, but often enough to help overcrowd nearly every reformatory in the land. These offenses, petty theft and so forth, cover a large part of juvenile delinquency.

The urban public school, year by year, comes closer to being synonymous with the slum school, in contrast to the private school, the parochial school, and the suburban white school; it is filled with children who learn soon enough that they belong to persecuted minorities. Today's slum school is one of many conduits through which some of these children are remanded to punitive and "rehabilitative" agencies where detention rather than education is the rule. Social critics like Paul Goodman have characterized the average public schools as an institution very much like a penal colony.[7] If still more police discipline is substituted for the fairly rigid school discipline that already prevails, then an even larger number of dark, or not so dark, and impoverished youth will be caught directly in the coils of the law. Far from attaining impartial justice, such that "each actual offender has an equal chance" of being apprehended and punished, we would achieve a marked enlargement of the discriminatory treatment chronically accorded underdogs. That such criminal justice shows no sign of abatement is a major component in the strife besetting America.

[5] Philip Selznick, "Foundations of the Theory of Organization," *American Sociological Review*, February 1948, p. 84.

[6] Skolnick and Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

[7] Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd* (New York: Random House, 1960).

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ONE CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE this point: discriminatory treatment before the law in a formal framework of equality weighs heavily, oppressively (and among both victims and offenders, more consciously than ever) on the poor. The poor, moreover, are likely to discover that unhappy truth early in life. Unlawful conduct *which results in arrest and adjudication* is overwhelmingly found among the young. Teen-agers (and subteen-agers), not deemed to have reached the age of reason, are technically irresponsible. Special courts exist to protect them from being branded as criminals. They and slightly older youths comprise the hard core of our highly publicized crime problem. Given a national population nearly half of which was born after 1945, those in the 16–21 age bracket are by far the largest criminal category. On this datum all authorities are agreed—as they are agreed on the low socioeconomic status of most youthful offenders. To be pigeonholed as offenders they must first have been convicted. Mere arrest cannot be equated with guilt, especially when, "According to a recent estimate based on 1963 F.B.I. crime reports approximately two and one-half million persons arrested annually for non-traffic offenses are not convicted." [8] Edward V. Sparer, who cites this estimate, goes on to say, "Despite the court's finding that such persons are not guilty, social punishment for the *fact of arrest* is often quick to follow." [9] He quotes from a New York memorandum, which in his opinion accurately describes one countrywide form of inequity:

> The major handicap from an arrest record appears to be in securing and retaining employment, membership in a labor organization, or apprenticeship training. Applications for both public and private employment sometimes ask not only whether an applicant has ever been convicted, but also whether he has ever been arrested on charges, and sometimes even whether he has ever received a summons. . . .
>
> The persons most affected by this practice are almost invariably those who reside in disadvantaged areas, of whom a high proportion are Negro and Puerto Rican. Wholesale arrests of "suspects" on vagrancy charges are often made when a crime or a "rumble" has occurred in a high-delinquency area. Most of these "suspects" are released after questioning, but their job opportunities have been endangered without any proof of guilt. . . .[10]

The disadvantaged boy living in a "high-delinquency area" may seem disrespectful, uppity, mischievous, or idle. The policeman, who enjoys a social status higher than that boy and his family, must decide whether or not to include him in a roundup of "suspects." If he chooses to make the "pinch," it will be a first arrest in about one case out of four. Guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity notwithstanding, this experience can blight the rest of the boy's life. Arrested, booked, interrogated, and discharged as innocent, he now has "a record," ostensibly unavailable to others who represent a society that wishes to protect him even if his conduct *has* been judged wrongful or harmful. The statutory language used in New York is similar to that of other jurisdictions: ". . . no person adjudicated a juvenile delinquent . . . may be denominated a criminal by reason of such adjudication." Further: "All police records relating to the arrest and disposition of any person under this article . . . shall be withheld from public inspection. . . ." Loopholes *are* specified; "such records shall be open to inspection upon good cause shown by the parent, guardian, next friend, or attorney of that person upon the written order of a judge of the family court in the county in which the order was made or, if the person is subsequently convicted of a crime, of a

[8] Edward V. Sparer, "Employability and the Juvenile 'Arrest' Record," *Work, Youth, and Unemployment,* Melvin Herman, Stanley Sadofsky, Bernard Rosenberg, eds. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968), p. 470.

[9] *Loc. cit.*

[10] *Loc. cit.*

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judge of the court in which he was convicted." [11]

These exceptions do not include possibly prejudiced employers, union leaders jealously guarding the ethnic exclusivity of their membership, or personnel in nonjudicial branches of the federal government. All are barred, as are neighbors, pressmen, and laymen at large, from scrutiny of presumably private and confidential documents. And all have fairly free access to them. Job applicants, as well as would-be apprentices and soldiers, with "records," can lie about their past, which is itself an actionable practice, or they can compromise themselves by admitting the truth. Alternatively, young people sign waivers to their legal right of confidentiality. Privileged information is released, legislative intent is contravened, and anyone who in his minority was justly or unjustly *charged* with an offense can be incriminated.

Sparer emphasizes the abuse, not to say the impropriety and near illegality, which most heavily penalizes young people who, in any event, are three or four times less employable than their more advantaged peers. Years ago, Austin Porterfield found no statistically significant difference between the waywardness of court children and college or precollege students. He defined the official delinquent as a friendless youth, moving under maximum exposure to arrest, usually on the street because there was no other place for him to be.[12] Such youths are hauled into station houses where their names appear on police blotters. Later on, out of school and out of work, countless numbers of them are disqualified from employment, from job training, and from service in the Armed Forces because they are held to be "poor risks"—with "records" they cannot erase.

The difficulties of slum-bred youths are thus compounded. Private employers, craft unions, and sections of the government disqualify precisely those whose employability is in the first place most restricted. It is usually considered too dangerous to hire these "potential" criminals. Sparer reports a study made by the New York Civil Liberties Union of employment agency practices, in which fully 75 percent of the agencies sampled ask job applicants about *arrest* records, and "as a matter of regular and automatic procedure," would not refer those with arrest records irrespective of any judicial determination that may have been made. Adjudications of "Delinquency," "Youthful Offender," and "Wayward Youth"—all are supposed to be purely "civil," and never "criminal" proceedings. The perversion of this principle exercises thoughtful judges, legal philosophers, and criminologists.

EVERY FEW MONTHS, CRIME is reported to be on the upswing, but it is not accidental that the full force of penal and social sanctions falls only on some offenders. The regular upswing can be partially attributed to greater efficiency in detecting and reporting crime committed not just by any citizen but by a certain kind of citizen. When two humane criminologists, Richard R. Korn and Lloyd W. McCorkle, ask, "How far may the State go in enforcing social values?" they correctly perceive ethical issues that transcend crime and punishment. We agree with them that "To press for unlimited enforcement efficiency is, in effect, to assert that the ends justify the means. To set limits on the reaches of the law is, in effect, to assert that the individual is himself a social end." [13] The inference is valid and we salute the praiseworthy sentiment that underlies it. But once again, as with Selznick, sight has been lost of a differential, selective, and invidious process. No one presses for truly

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 472.

[12] Austin L. Porterfield, "Delinquency and Its Outcome in Court and College," *American Journal of Sociology*, November 1943, pp. 199–208.

[13] Richard R. Korn and Lloyd W. McCorkle, *Criminology and Penology* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1959), p. 97.

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unlimited enforcement efficiency. Those who press wish to achieve greater and greater enforcement efficiency in the *same limited* area of class and race that has never ceased to be their concern.

Korn and McCorkle, in passages immediately preceding their critical question, draw upon a prominent legal authority, William Seagle, who neatly circumscribes the area. Seagle finds most justices of the Supreme Court of the United States expounding the view that efficiency in criminal law enforcement is irreconcilable with decency and liberty—which, in the profoundest sense, renders it unconstitutional. He sees the open exposition of this philosophy in Justice Jackson's statement that, "The forefathers, after consulting the lessons of history, designed our Constitution to place obstacles in the way of a too permeating police surveillance, which they seemed to think a greater danger to a free people than the escape of some criminals from punishment." To which Seagle appends an aphorism of his own: "The inefficiency of the criminal law is indeed the pride of democracy." [14] Except for an additional appraisal, all this could still relate to unlimited efficiency. The key paragraph follows:

> Power can be curbed only by making the law inefficient. Indeed the establishment of every limitation upon political power has been a tacit recognition of the undesirability of legal efficiency. Humanity has constantly drawn back from legal efficiency as from the brink of an abyss. When threatened by efficient law enforcement, it has loudly demanded Twelve Tables, codes, bills of rights, declarations of the rights of man, and full-fledged written constitutions—*all for the purpose of protecting the weak against the strong, and the individual against the state.* In short, it has always demanded inefficiency as an inalienable right of man. Of course no one literally demands "inefficiency," which as an ideal has always been in bad odor. Everyone actually demands "liberty." Liberty, however, is only inefficiency in false face. [Emphasis added.] [15]

"Protecting the individual against the state" is without any possible respite a matter of the utmost urgency. Safeguards built into criminal law are a political shield against authoritarian and totalitarian rule. So long, however, as democratic forms persist and we continue to cherish them, protecting the weak against the strong must remain uppermost in our minds. In the first instance, every full-blown twentieth-century dictatorship, whether of the Right or the Left, has taught us anew how heavily civil liberty and the principle of legality depend upon criminal law. That much should have been learned by anyone who has lived through the past 50 years of world history. Once in power, the Bolsheviks, the Nazis, the Maoists, and the Fidelistas, having enjoyed such civil liberty as they found (sometimes a great deal, sometimes very little), destroyed every vestige of the rights on which they had capitalized.

Over two decades ago, Jerome Hall summed up several traits common to revolutionary authoritarian movements:

> Special police are exempt from legal constraint: they arrest, try, execute, and exile without legal restraint. Appeal is limited or non-existent. Special tribunals for the trial of political offenders may be depended upon to effectuate the will of the government. There is sweeping abrogation of constitutional guarantees. All of this is rationalized and sustained by controlled philosophic thought, as interpreted by the leaders to implement their political aims. . . . Thus, during revolution, law, especially criminal law, is used as a party weapon.[16]

And, we may say that this is still so, long after the revolution has run its course!

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 96.

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 96–97.

[16] Jerome Hall, *General Principles of Criminal Law* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1947), p. 57.

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Hall has referred us to the Russian Penal Code of 1926 which stated that:

> A crime is any socially dangerous act or omission which threatens the foundations of the Soviet political structure and that system of law which has been established by the Workers' and Peasants' Government for the period of transition to a Communist structure.
>
> In cases where the Criminal Code makes no direct reference to particular forms of crimes, punishments or other measures of social protection are applied in accordance with those Articles of the Criminal Code which deal with crimes most closely approximating, in gravity and in kind, to the crimes actually committed. . . .[17]

Similarly in Nazi Germany, the Act of June 28, 1935, provided that:

> Any person who commits an act which the Law declares to be punishable or which is deserving of penalty according to the fundamental conceptions of penal law and sound popular feeling, shall be punished. If there is no penal law directly covering an act, it shall be punished under the law of which the fundamental conception applies most nearly to the said act.[18]

The arbitrariness which this Act exudes lasted only as long as National Socialism. Its spirit, by which the rule of law was temporarily expunged for Germans, has proved to be more durable in Soviet Russia. Fifty-one years after the October Revolution, James Reston supplied a pertinent postscript. Reston, writing from Russia for the *New York Times* on November 21, 1968, noted: "Moscow has its own 'law and order.' If justice is 'incidental' to order, as J. Edgar Hoover is reported to have said the other day, he would be happy in Moscow. This is a policeman's paradise, and 'crime in the streets' is manageable."

At this writing, the United States has still declined to opt fully for such "law and order" as Moscow confers on a disenfranchised citizenry. No higher priority has as yet totally eclipsed or absolutely subordinated that concept of justice which runs like a golden thread through British and American criminal law. Those who have not collapsed into totalitarianism, like those who have wrenched themselves free from its confinement, are better protected in their struggle for "the individual against the state" than they are in their struggle for "the weak against the strong." Pending a politically calamitous resolution of our many social and economic crises, which would require us to suspend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, we are markedly more vulnerable on the second score than on the first.

BEFORE SUPRAFAMILIAL CONTROL or centralized state authority came into being, when man's existence was still coterminous with the band, the clan, and the tribe, reparation and revenge were identical. Attacker and defender, criminal and victim, and their kindred, all governed by an unshakable belief in collective or consanguineous responsibility, involved one another in endless acts of retaliation. Every grave offense directed at an individual was also aimed at his whole clan or tribe: extended families avenged themselves on extended families, as retaliation followed upon retaliation. Most important in primitive or preliterate and early Western law was that "Injury was scaled in accordance with the seriousness of the trespass and the social evaluation of the aggrieved party." [19] Whoever attacked also ineluctably provoked defense and counterattack—setting two families in motion, touching off a vendetta or blood feud. (The term, blood feud, suggests kinship, which always mattered most, rather than bloodshed, which was often present.) Punishment was carefully graded to the litigant's social position.

This theme is the subject matter of all

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[18] *Ibid.*

[19] Norman C. Cantor, *The English* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), p. 33.

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sagas, of all epic literature—whether that of nomadic tribesmen, or more settled peoples like the ancient Greeks, Romans, Icelanders, Gauls, and Anglo-Saxons. Gradually, the blood feud gave way to other forms of reparation, "composition," or compensation. Survivals of the very old tradition remain in virtually every society, including our own. How could it be otherwise when, "The blood feud in Anglo-Saxon society was as central to social life as employment and taxes are today." [20] By modern standards, the violence of medieval Europe was prodigious. In the end, it must have been too enervating and too dangerous to be borne. With plague and hunger never far behind, only so much manslaughter, murder, and robbery-by-stealth could remain unchecked. An alternative to the blood feud, a legal process, had to be worked out. Christendom, of which Britain was a part after the seventh century, sorely needed an authority both broader and more powerful than that of angry kinsmen. It was on this social necessity that Anglo-Saxon society founded the folk or community court.

From the late sixth century onwards, a folk court or *moot* operated, at least among the leading warrior class in the small kingdoms of Wessex, Kent, Northumbria, and Mercia. It did endure until Anglo-Norman times and then, in uneven stages after 1066, to the indigenous Angle and Saxon nations. By the eighth century, moots were differentiated into local courts, called hundreds and others, encompassing subkingdoms or whole kingdoms, which were designated as shires. Norman F. Cantor, in his history of England, graphically describes how they worked:

> Whether it was the hundred or the shire court, the leading men of the community presided and arrived at decisions by a kind of consensus of the meeting. These leaders of the court may be called doomsmen or elders or wisemen but in all cases they were inevitably the men of greater substance and influence whose task was to work out and perpetuate legal processes in accordance with customary law. In the case of the hundred court the elders of the court could be ordinary peasants; in the case of the shire court they would always be the great warlords in the community. The first task of the folk moot was to build upon the old Germanic tradition that the blood feud could be abrogated in return for monetary compensation, the *Wergeld* (literally, man-money), to the dead man's kin. The kin were not required to take the wergeld and waive the right of revenge; it was the first obligation of the court to urge them to accept it. It was their second task to prepare lists of wergelds for every possible kind of violence, from the loss of a toenail, to the killing of a slave, to the killing of a nobleman or king (the king's wergeld was placed so high that no man, no matter how many cattle he owned, could afford to pay it).[21]

The folk moot was designed to inhibit and, if possible, to abolish the exercise of family vengeance. It sought, without the sophistication of Roman law—which left no perceptible mark on early Britain—to determine who committed murder and robbery by stealth. Neither the rules of evidence nor rational procedure for the interrogation of witnesses had come into being. Moots reached a verdict by invoking divine aid as it was made manifest in the ordeal and by compurgation. A defendant was unlikely to survive either the ordeal of hot iron or the ordeal of cold water. In the former, he touched a piece of red-hot iron, and if after three days his hand showed signs of festering, he was promptly hanged. England, with its many lakes and streams, seems to have favored the ordeal of water, in which the defendant, bound hand and foot, was flung into a body of water. "If he sank he was innocent and if he floated he was guilty, on the premise that water, being a holy element, would not receive a guilty man. The defendant thus had a choice between probable death by

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

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drowning and certain death by hanging." [22]

The historical record shows refinements and variations (the use of boiling cauldrons from which stones had to be retrieved, or two- and three-fold ordeals), but in essence this was the judicial process. Christian churchmen initially found it repugnant, but while they added oaths and efforts to extract confessions, the ordeal had become so essential a part of Anglo-Saxon life, that it could not be extirpated. Cantor argues that the folk court provided an element of rationality: "Only those defendants were put to the ordeal who were either commonly suspected of guilt"—which is an element of rationality—"or were of the lower social strata"—which is something else. Cantor informs us that "It was a process almost exclusively designed for those who were peasants or who were 'ill-famed,' which to the medieval mind with its strong class biases meant almost the same thing." Then the historian cannot refrain from ruminating upon what he has just written: "Those who are horrified by this deep social prejudice might reflect on the kinds of people who have suffered capital punishment in the United States, noting the overwhelming proportion of Negroes and poor people. In this respect we have remained faithful to the traditions of Anglo-Saxon law." [23]

As long as society is divided into the noble and the ignoble (which is to say, always and everywhere, and with or without ideological support) special provision must also be made for those of wealth and prominence. In this too we have remained faithful to the tradition of Anglo-Saxon law. Compurgations against indictments in the folk court were for noblemen what ordeals were for peasants. Again, divine intercession was called for but in a much less exacting and arduous manner than the harsh method reserved for the common populace. In compurgation, the defendant swore to his innocence, and oath-helpers, graded by their wergelds, swore that his oath could be taken as "clean," in other words, that he was a man of good repute.

The court could decide only who should have the privilege of compurgation and how weighty the oath-helpers needed to be. As Cantor writes,

> Beyond this, a rich man who was oblivious to the heavenly perils of perjury and who had powerful relatives and friends of like dispositions could commit murder and robbery with impunity. He might be dealt with by the kin of the victim, but the court could not convict him. Thus Anglo-Saxon process tended to provide one procedure for the rich and the powerful and another for the poor and the unknown.

It is an understatement to conclude that "This class bias in somewhat less flagrant forms was to have a long history in English law and has not entirely ended at the present time." [24] Class bias, complicated by race, never ceased to operate. More opaque, subdued, and genuinely humane in the modern era, its recrudescence is apparent as crime becomes a public obsession.

THE IDEA OF INDIVIDUAL AUTONOMY was alien to all feudal law. Subjects, not yet citizens, were divested of will: they could only obey. In a strict hierarchical order, thought to be ordained by Almighty God, no inferior could legitimately bring any accusation against a superior. Subjects were not entitled to invoke the help of a law court except against those of equal or subordinate status. In the feudal theocracy, no layman could charge a cleric with any crime. Walter Ullman, the eminent medievalist, has shown that in terms of ecclesiastical and secular law, *people* of every age were defined as minors, requiring the undisputed protection of their overall superiors who, in turn, had been deputized by God to act *in loco parentis*. And what of the folk court? Ullman's

[22] *Loc. cit.*
[23] *Loc. cit.*
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

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answer is, "One can best understand the meaning of the *Munt* [moot] if one compares it to the guardianship of a child: it is the kind of protection which a father affords to a child, or a guardian to his ward, or in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England, the husband to his wife." [25]

High treason could be committed only against the king, or rather, against his "highness," his *majestas*, a term pointing to the sublime office and function of him who was major. No royal *persona* could, and where the monarchy survives, none can today commit a crime. By the same token, no mere vassal, but only a subject could commit high treason. "Petty treason" was of a lower order: it consisted in murder of the master by his servant, murder of the bishop by a clerk or a layman of his diocese, or murder of the husband by the wife. A remnant of old Roman law, elaborated by medieval jurists, namely, "What pleases the prince has the force of law," is quoted in modern canon law to this day. In a unique blend of Hellenistic, Roman, and Christian elements, the High Middle Ages produced a high legal synthesis. By it, law, already apotheosized in the Invisible Ruler, was literally embodied in the visible ruler. An organic, functional, collectivist metaphor—precluding any such novel idea as individual citizenship—underlay the whole conception. "The body politic" and related imagery, as Michael Waltzer has pointed out, served to justify a rigid hierarchy of persons which gradually supplanted the chaos of feudal arrangements:

> . . . as the head rules the body, medieval writers argued, so God the world and the king the polity; as the angels stand below God in nine ranks and orders, so the nobler parts of the body politic below the king and the priests of the body of Christ below the Pope.[26]

Waltzer maintains that the inequality thus defended also established persistent patterns of obedience and deference. His conclusion is unexceptionable. And yet the curious system, which comprises so large a part of our cultural heritage, carried with it in embryonic form what we today would call the rule of law. The premodern world (and a whole assortment of metaphysical underpinnings) had to decompose before that rule could become a widely held ideal. For a while, with the spread of equalitarianism from Western Europe, the ideal seemed to have triumphed. Actually, in waxing and waning its precarious nature is clearly exposed.

At best the rule of law never fully banished gross inequality before the law. A veteran English magistrate, reflecting on his long career, finds it most appropriate in 1969 to use as the epigraph to a book of selected memoirs [27] this passage from King Lear (IV:6):

> See how yon' justice rails upon yon' simple thief.
> Hark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy,
> which is the justice, which is the thief?

By and large, and handy-dandy, Shakespeare's Fool knew enough to ask the question without which no criminological answer is worth a moment's notice.

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[25] Walter Ullman, *The Individual and Society in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen & Co., 1967), p. 21.

[26] Michael Waltzer, *The Revolution of the Saints* (New York: Atheneum, 1968), p. 7.

[27] John Watson, *Which Is The Justice?* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969).

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Paul Roazen

Psychoanalysis and Moral Values

My guess is that a discussion of the relation between moral values and psychoanalysis would have made Sigmund Freud extremely uneasy. Freud never doubted that his ideas were revolutionary and therefore bound to have effects far beyond the understanding and treatment of the neuroses. At times Freud could even thunder like a modern prophet, challenging the values and practices of Western Christendom.

Yet Freud always feared that his empirical discoveries might get swallowed up in mankind's search for ethical direction. As he aged, his devotion to science grew increasingly pronounced; and as his illness restricted his activities, he drew back somewhat from therapy. After contracting cancer in 1923, Freud never again wrote a case history. The writings of his last 16 years, as he gradually withdrew from the world, contain some of the most sustained abstract restatements of his findings that can be found anywhere in his work.

But even as Freud kept insisting more and more on the status of psychoanalysis as a science, he found himself giving freer reign to his own speculative impulses. In his later years he wrote about the roots of religion, the future of civilization, and pondered other age-old quandaries. His hope was that some of his students would perceive the moral implications of psychoanalytic principles, and that workers in other fields would be able to revolutionize their disciplines as he had altered the shape of modern psychology.

What were Freud's practices as a clinician? Far too little is known here, though more is preserved in the oral tradition of psychoanalysis than has ever made its way into print. For all his genius, Freud was not exempt from many of the social prejudices of his day. By our current standards Freud the therapist was decidedly moralistic. "Be better next time!" was the way one of Freud's patients once summarized Freud's approach. Addicts, psychotics, delinquents, male perverts—those cases for whom the scope of psychoanalysis has been expanded since Freud's death—would have seemed more or less repugnant to him. Though he wanted to understand as much of human behavior as possible, he could not help being a man of his time. Unless one can acknowledge how different Freud was from what would be acceptable in a therapist today, it is impossible to see just how great were the forces of social prejudice, both in the world at large and in his own soul, with which he had to contend.

Seeing Freud in proper historical perspective can also illuminate some characteristic clinical shortcomings of our own day. For if Freud was more intolerant as a therapist than would now be considered usual, he was also much more boldly individualistic than many of the followers who pay him homage. The Central Europe of his time was far more cosmopolitan and less narrowly bourgeois than, for example, some contemporary practitioners of Freud's art. Standards of belief and value were more multiple and less uniform than a modern mass society tends to produce.

In one case a middle-aged woman came to Freud because of her guilt over homosexual urges. Freud recommended her to a Viennese pupil for an analysis; as a result of a year of treatment the patient was free of her guilt feelings but actively homosexual. With some trepidation, the analyst reported to Freud the outcome of the analysis. But Freud surprised his disciple by concluding that it was quite an appropriate point at which to terminate the analysis. The patient's children had grown up, her sexual affair was discreet, and her husband was now interested in her mainly for social pur-

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poses. One wonders whether most candidates in training today would get off so easily were this the upshot of a supervised analysis.

FREUD COULD BE remarkably emancipated from some middle-class values. In another case he actively intervened in behalf of a specific marriage choice, one that today might seem rather bizarre. This patient had had a long-standing sexual relationship with his brother's wife. As a result of an analysis with Freud, the man was freed from his incestuous bond, only to fall in love with his niece, the daughter of his former mistress. Freud thought this new relationship represented a solid step forward for his patient. The girl, however, was recalcitrant and resisted the advances of her uncle. Freud thereupon recommended that she undergo an analysis. The girl's analyst was told by Freud that there was a secret in the case, and that when the analyst discovered it she should report it to Freud. Within a week or so the analyst returned with the news that not only was the secret uncovered, but there was a secret to the case that Freud himself did not know.

This case fits the archetype of the legendary Viennese love tangle. The young girl did indeed know about the long-standing liaison between her suitor and her mother, as Freud had wanted to find out; but he did not know that the girl had the fantasy that she herself was the child of the illicit union between her uncle and her mother, which fully explained her hesitancy to get involved with him sexually. Once Freud was apprised of the girl's inner world, he dropped the idea of the match. When writing up this case for publication, Freud tried to suppress, no doubt out of discretion, the familial connection between the partners in this proposed union. (At the very end of Freud's account of this case, there was a return of the suppressed. The patient eventually "chose as his wife a respectable girl outside his family circle. . . ." Until this point in the narrative Freud had not hinted that any of the patient's former loves had been within the "family circle.") The fact that Freud would countenance, even try to promote, such a match should demonstrate what a world away from today's middle-class values was his own private therapeutic practice.

Freud's distance from the values of conventional society played a role in his individualistic conception of treatment. The analyst was not supposed to burden a patient with extraneous problems, either analyst's or society's. Ideally, the aim of an analysis was to help the patient, enriched from his inner resources, to become his own best self. Freud hoped and expected that in each patient the analyst could anticipate finding an ally, the struggling self that had been weighted down by mistakes in upbringing and misconception of goals.

Freud took for granted what nowadays seems so rare in patients, a self that knows what it wants. The patients Freud worked best with were those with already well-constituted egos. As Freud remarked to a patient at the end of a three-months' analysis in 1908, "What I liked best about working with you was that as soon as I gave you something you were able to make use of it." Freud took for granted, at least in the early period of his practice, a well-functioning personality capable of integrating the insights he could offer.

Bold as he was as a practicing clinician, Freud remained shy about discussing the aims of analytic therapy. In his earlier years he had been far more outgoing and interventionist than later on, especially after he had contracted his cancer; in those last years of his life he was a good deal more disillusioned about the prospects of therapeutic success, and altogether more preoccupied with the future of his findings as a scientific body. Yet almost nowhere did Freud seek to define the concept of psychic health. It was characteristic of him to have relegated a problem like freedom, for example, to a mere footnote.

The healthy was not just the same as the worthy—on that point Freud was insistent. One might be healthy and still good-for-nothing; one might also be quite sick and yet, in Freud's mind, quite valuable as a human being. He did not want to have to give advice or preach to patients, for that would be to duplicate the techniques of hypnotic treatment and suggestion, as well as some of the mistaken tasks of traditional religions. Freud assumed in his patients the role of a well-integrated, even if overly severe, superego, which may in part explain his relative lateness in coming to discuss this concept. Even though people of fancy and imagination could hold a special place in

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his heart, Freud steadfastly admired the conscientious and the upright.

FREUD COULD SCARCELY HAVE FORESEEN the uses his concepts would be put to in the thirty or so years since his death. As much as Freud had not wanted psychoanalysis to become a mere "handmaid," as he liked to put it, to psychiatry, in America at any rate it would be hard to overestimate the impact of his ideas on psychiatric theory and practice. Dr. Spock's child-raising manuals would be intellectually inconceivable without the backdrop of Freud's work.

Psychoanalysis has had its successes, and analysts are now hardly in the position of being an underpaid revolutionary band at odds with conventional wisdom. Analysts have direct as well as indirect influence not only on psychiatric departments but on schools, law courts, universities, professional training centers, business corporations, and so on. As long as Freud and his followers were themselves on the outside they could scarcely be accused of advocating conformism. They could even afford to evade certain intellectual issues, thanks to the social position they found themselves in. To the degree that today's analysts have become members of the establishment, however, Freud's ideas need to be clarified lest they be pressed willy-nilly into service in behalf of the status quo. Problems such as that of moral values need especially to be re-examined, in the very different historical conditions under which we now live.

For some time now psychoanalytic theory has been separated by a rather wide gulf from psychoanalytic practice. For those of a bookish cast of mind, it is disquieting that theoretical understanding is of so little help in orienting oneself in psychoanalysis. On theoretical grounds one may find little cause for worry that psychoanalytic ideas will be used to promote conformism or mere adjustment; but the widespread influence of psychoanalysis today as well as the background and training of those who now become therapists can lead to legitimate concern over the role certain types of values have come to play in clinical practice.

It is simply not possible to exclude from psychoanalytic thought the problem of moral values. To attempt to do so is only to encourage the uncritical acceptance of the prevailing standards of morality. No one of course can choose goals for other people; the task of good theory should be merely to make it as hard as possible for psychoanalysis to be used unthinkingly for a given political or social end.

Let me cite a few examples from my own limited experience. I remember seeing the case of a young Jewish girl presented at a psychiatric hospital. She came from the proverbial good middle-class family, but had run away, across the country, for the sake of adventure and "sleeping around." Her parents had finally retrieved her and put her in the hospital. She seemed to me a not especially intelligent young lady, and her rather standard manner of complying with the way some young people dress nowadays did not make her look any the more interesting.

To the clean-cut, hard-working resident who was treating her, however, she was schizophrenic, and with psychoanalytic theory in hand everyone in the room tried to examine the roots of her troubles. About two-thirds through the discussion the senior psychiatrist, an analyst, reacted with volcanic fury; he demanded to know what was the evidence for schizophrenia in the girl. Groping for justification, the resident finally had to admit that he did not like the way the girl dressed and wore her hair. By the end of the meeting the "diagnosis" of a hippie—or perhaps a diagnosis of a pseudo-hippie—had been agreed upon.

From my participation in case conferences, two other illustrations of the role moral values can play in clinical practice come to mind. A depressed black man was having an affair with a white woman. As the psychiatrist explained his handling of the case, "I didn't exactly criticize the affair, but I tried to make him see that a white woman who has an affair with a black man must have a devaluated sense of herself." Perhaps this was so, and perhaps the hippie was also schizophrenic, but such pat ways of dismissing behavior that deviates from middle-class norms does seem humanly offensive and scientifically questionable.

At another meeting, a peace corps psychiatrist described his work as largely focused on preventing young men from "going native" and marrying young girls in the field. He regarded

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it as axiomatic that college-educated white Americans who wanted to marry "barefoot girls with only a third-grade education" must be suffering from mental disturbance. In one case, the psychiatrist said, the young man in love had "shaky ego boundaries," which justified psychiatric intervention—as if any impending marriage were not an appropriate time for such an upheaval.

From many such instances one acquires the feeling that almost any prejudice can be defended by means of modern psychology. Since psychoanalytic concepts aim at being scientific, they should be capable of being used for very different political and social purposes, from the most conservative to the most radical. What is impermissible, however, is for someone to assume his values and beliefs in such a way that rather striking moral positions are taken via clinical categories without an awareness that the same categories might justify very different moral alternatives.

In one area of contemporary psychology the role of values has crept in rather notably, although quite surreptitiously, and that is in developmental models of personality growth. To what extent are these models (such as those of Erik Erikson) descriptions of how things do happen, and to what extent are they accounts of what we would like and approve? Have we in fact examined anything like all the possible human potentialities that it might be possible to try to foster? These are questions which on logical grounds alone psychoanalysis must try to answer. After all, to say that an act is immature or neurotic is to imply a standard of maturity or health. And yet how little attention is paid to what we could possibly mean by normality.

At his best Freud stood for the ideal of autonomy. It is a commonplace by now that the psychoanalytic revolution has contributed to the liberalizing trends in our time. It can never be enough, though, to call upon a heritage that values individual freedom of choice and labors against deceit and coercion. Hypocrisy arises precisely when, under the guise of certain glittering ideals, rather objectionable conformist practices are permitted to flourish. The more psychoanalytic theory pays attention to problems of ethics and values, the harder it is going to be to make moral choices in undercover ways. Suggestion is still very much an element in treatment, even in the hands of well-trained psychoanalysts, and hidden ethical advice is all the more likely in those who think of themselves as morally aloof and neutral. New threats to human freedom are always arising, and psychoanalysis has to adapt to these if it is not to become one more component in the social hierarchy at odds with the growth of humane individualism.

Charles V. Willie

The Black Family in America

THE PREVAILING PATTERN of family life among Negro people is the conjugal unit or the nuclear household consisting of husband, wife, and children. Both spouses are present in nearly 70 percent of all Negro families.

Most Negro households are supported by the work of a man. More than 90 percent of adult black men who are in the labor force are employed.

Nearly one-third of the black families have incomes of less than $3,000 a year and only about half of these poor families receive public welfare. In general, black families are forced to make do with a median income that is approximately 40 percent lower than the median for whites.

These facts indicate that the Negro family

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is still around, it has not broken down. And these facts also indicate a prevailing pattern of family stability among black people, a family that has persevered in spite of limited resources. As the psychiatrist Robert Coles says, "there's sinew in the Negro family." [1]

The miracle of the Negro family is that it *has* survived and grown stronger over the years. To avoid the charge of chauvinism, let me offer some historical data. Gunnar Myrdal, relying heavily on the research of the late E. Franklin Frazier of Howard University, wrote in *The American Dilemma,* that "Most slave owners . . . did not care about the marital state of their slaves. . . ." Indeed, "the internal slave trade broke up many slave families. . . ." [2] These facts were confirmed by Frederick Douglass, who was born in slavery in 1817 and who wrote in his great autobiography:

> The reader must not expect me to say much of my family. . . . My first experience of life, as I now remember it . . . began in the family of my grandmother and grandfather. . . . The practice of separating mothers from their children and hiring them out at distances too great to admit of their meeting, save at long intervals, was a marked feature of the cruelty and barbarity of the slave system. . . . It had no interest in recognizing or preserving any of the ties that bind families together or to their homes.
>
> My grandmother's five daughters [one of whom was my mother] were hired out in this way, and my only recollection of my own mother are of a few hasty visits made in the night on foot, after the daily tasks were over, and when she was under the necessity of returning in time to respond to the . . . call to the field in the early morning. . . .
>
> Of my father I know nothing. Slavery had no recognition of fathers. . . .
>
> . . . Old master . . . only allowed the little children to live with grandmother for a limited time; . . . as soon as they were big enough they were promptly taken away.
>
> . . . The time came when I must go. . . . I was seven years old.[3]

Frederick Douglass was an ingenious man. By the age of 21, he had escaped from slavery. In disguise, he traveled from Maryland to New York and immediately sent for his fiance, Anna Murray, who was a free woman. They were married and lived together as man and wife 44 years until Mrs. Douglass died in 1882.[4]

These excerpts from *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* tell us two things: first, there was little opportunity for experiencing family life among black slaves; second, former slaves were nevertheless capable of forming enduring family unions. The first fact is usually remembered; the second fact frequently forgotten.

Some social scientists have tried to explain the higher proportion of broken families among blacks than among whites as a direct outgrowth of the slave experience. For example, Andrew Billingsley has said,

> the slave system had a crippling effect on the establishment, maintenance, and growth of normal patterns of family life among Negro people. . . . This crippled the development not only of individual slaves, but of families, and hence of the whole society of Negro people. . . . The consequences these conditions wrought for Negroes under the slave system were direct and insidious. The consequences for succeeding and even modern generations of Negroes are, perhaps, less direct, but no less insidious.[5]

Daniel Patrick Moynihan attempts to specify the consequences: "In essence, the Negro community has been forced into a matriarchal structure which, because it is so out of line with the rest of the American society, seriously retards the progress of the group as a whole." He called this alleged matriarchal structure and its limitations the "fearful price" the Negro American community has paid "for the incredible mistreatment to which it has been subjected over the past three centuries." [6]

But the facts do not jibe with the assertions. The Negro family is *not* basically a matriarchal system. More than 90 percent of the adult black men in the labor force are working to

[1] Robert Coles, "There's Sinew in the Negro Family"; background paper for White House Conference on Civil Rights, Washington, D. C., November 1965. Reprinted from the *Washington Post,* October 10, 1965, p. E. 1.

[2] Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma,* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944, p. 931.

[3] Frederick Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass,* New York: Macmillian, 1962; first published in 1892, pp. 27–33.

[4] *Ibid.,* 204–205; see also p. 20 of the Introduction.

[5] Andrew Billingsley, *Black Families in White America,* Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968, pp. 68–69.

[6] U.S. Department of Labor, *The Negro Family,* Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965, p. 29.

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support their households. Moreover, approximately 70 percent of the black families are two-parent families; and 60 percent of all black children grow up in households in which a mother and father are present. The hypothesis that the slavery heritage has contributed to both a high rate of family instability and a matriarchal system fails to recognize that among intact families (the prevailing pattern) many blacks have had grandparents or great-grandparents who were born as slaves. These two-parent households are stable, although their ancestors were not free or able to form enduring marriages.

Indeed, the history of the Negro family must be viewed as a miraculous movement from more or less *nothing* to *something.* After slavery, black people continued to experience severe handicaps. Yet in 1967, for example, 70–71 percent of all Negro families in the United States were husband-wife units compared with 89 percent of all-white families.[7] Since the black family has been quickly catching up in family stability (defined as a two-parent household) it seems probable that most of the family instability among blacks is more a function of contemporary economic circumstances and racial discrimination than of historical circumstances such as slavery. An indirect association, we know, exists between family income and family instability: as the family income decreases, the proportion of families headed by one parent increases. This holds true for both blacks and whites.

In households with an income of more than $10,000 a year, there is no difference by race in the proportion of one-parent families; 5 percent of the white families in this higher income category are headed by females and 6 percent of the black families have female heads. Among extremely poor families with incomes under $2,000 a year, the proportion headed by females among blacks (61 percent) is almost twice as great as the proportion headed by females among whites (36 percent).[8] Why the proportions of one-parent families among white and black affluent households are similar while the proportions differ greatly among black and white poor is a problem worth investigation. Indeed, race, family status, and economic circumstances are interrelated in a complex way. We call attention to this fact to underscore the danger of arriving at simplistic conclusions about the correlation among these three factors, such as were arrived at in the U.S. Labor Department report on "The Negro Family."[9]

In an article entitled "Intergenerational Poverty," I offered two hypotheses about the relationship between race, poverty, and family instability:

> Personal and family connected circumstances are likely to be more powerful explanations of poverty among whites than among [blacks].
>
> Institutional arrangements and patterns of social organization are likely to be more powerful explanations of poverty among blacks than among whites.[10]

My hypothesis about poverty among whites is the one usually offered to account for poverty among blacks. Further discussion indicates why these hypotheses were formulated:

> Institutional changes [particularly in the expanding economy] during the past three or four decades have resulted in a substantial reduction in the proportion of whites who are poor. External changes in social organization have upgraded 87 percent of the white population beyond the poverty level. The 13 percent who remain poor probably have problems which are more personal and less susceptible to mass amelioration through institutional manipulations. . . . The proportion of poor Negroes, however, remains at a high level [approximately 30 percent] and may still be amenable to ameliorative mass efforts. . . . In addition to deliberate institutional changes which may increase opportunities in an expanding econ-

[7] U.S. Census Bureau, "Negro Population: March, 1967," *Current Population Reports,* Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968, p. 3.
[8] U.S. Census Bureau, *Trends in Social and Economic Conditions in Metropolitan Areas,* Series P-23, No. 27, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969.
[9] U.S. Department of Labor, *op. cit.*
[10] Charles V. Willie, "Intergenerational Poverty," *Poverty and Human Resources Abstracts,* February 1969, pp. 12–13.

The Higher Worship

"A very unassuming man, the Prime Minister," said Richard Marsh [a Labour MP] on one occasion, referring to Mr. Harold Wilson. "His room is very modestly furnished. Just a throne. And a prayer mat."
New Statesman, November 13, 1970

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> omy, Negroes require deliberate institutional changes which will prevent racial discrimination. Until these are put into effect, we cannot know how large the residual proportion of [black] poor people might be who need such individualized attention as the 13 percent of poor whites may now require. . . .
>
> It is not concluded that poverty among whites cannot be further reduced by more changes in the institutional systems of society. Rather, it is suggested that new manipulations of social institutions will probably net a small rate of change in the proportion of poor whites, since most whites who could benefit from these major institutional changes have already taken advantage of them.[11]

Based on this analysis, I assert that the Moynihan proposition that stabilizing the black family is the best way of upgrading it economically projects a solution upon the black poor that would be more appropriate for the white poor. The institutional changes that have rescued nearly nine out of every ten whites from poverty have not yet run their full course for blacks. Hence all forms of racial discrimination must be prohibited so that the opportunities of an expanding economy become available to blacks; then and only then can it be determined if family instability rather than an unequal opportunity system is the chief cause of their poverty.

My Washington, D.C., studies of juvenile delinquency form a partial basis for the hypothesis about poverty among black people.[12] I discovered that *reducing family instability would probably contribute to a greater reduction in delinquency among whites than among blacks and that increasing economic opportunities would very likely contribute to a greater reduction in delinquency among blacks than among whites.* While a good deal of family instability existed in the Negro community (although the two-parent family was the norm), economic insecurity was overwhelming. Thus I concluded that one might be successful in reducing family instability if one first dealt with economic insecurity.

Meanwhile, I would suggest another approach. The nation should study intensively the strengths of the black family. Of black children who integrated white schools in the South, Robert Coles has said:

> I was constantly surprised at the endurance shown by children we would call poor or . . . culturally disadvantaged. . . . What enabled such children from such families to survive emotional and educational ordeals that many white middle-class boys and girls would find impossible? [13]

The survival of the Negro family in America is significant. Courage, endurance, and ingenuity have contributed to its survival. By understanding how the Negro family has transcended overwhelming obstacles, Americans might learn how to strengthen all families in this nation and even the family of man.

Reflecting upon his experiences as a slave, Frederick Douglass said: "A man's troubles are always half disposed of when he finds endurance the only alternative." [14] During the 1960s, Martin Luther King, Jr. said: "Historians in the future years will have to say there lived a great people . . . a black people . . . who bore their burdens of oppression in the heat of many days and who, through tenacity and creative commitment, injected new meaning into the veins of American life." [15] In these statements are manifested the significant black heritage—endurance and transcendence—which have helped the black population to come to its present level of family stability. Our task is not to discover ways of overhauling the black family so that it may be re-fashioned in the image of whites. More important is understanding the contribution of the Negro family and how it has accomplished a remarkable stability in one century of partial freedom.

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[11] *Loc. cit.*

[12] Charles V. Willie, "The Relative Contribution of Family Status and Economic Status to Juvenile Delinquency," *Social Problems,* Winter 1967, p. 331.

[13] Robert Coles, *Children of Crisis,* New York: Dell, 1967.

[14] Frederick Douglass, *op. cit.,* p. 39.

[15] Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here?* Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.

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Leonard Kriegel

No Jokes, No Mind

WHEN I CAME TO SEE Mike Nichols's film version of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, the lines on both sides of the Sutton Theater were already long. There are, apparently, a large number of New Yorkers willing to spend $3.50 for a brief dose of humanistic piety. War is not only hell, as General Sherman supposedly said, it is also perfectly attuned to the "good guys, bad guys" psychology so characteristic of our America. Aimed at the young in heart and mind, *Catch-22* can be absorbed into the general style of the times: "revolutionary" *zilch*.

Nichols and screenwriter-actor Buck Henry took the job of translating the novel to the screen seriously. Given the limitations of what they had to work with, they have done a creditable job. Unlike most novelists whose work is used by screenwriters, Heller cannot complain that he has been artistically bludgeoned. If anything, the film is structurally tighter than the novel. Nichols has eliminated Heller's obsession with the vaudeville comedian's *shtick*, his need to pulverize his audience like an intellectual Milton Berle. It was this quality that made the novel funny for the first 100 or so pages and difficult to get through beyond that. Nichols chose—and the decision is one for which he must be praised—to create a film that would stand not on the slapstick humor of the novel (after the opening scenes, the film is not even particularly funny) but on the antiwar and anticapitalist themes hidden beneath the humorous fat of the novel. Nichols has created a "message" film and the sincerity of his message is something I am quite willing to accept.

The trouble is that the film confirms what one had begun to suspect: *Catch-22* was a vastly overrated novel that was as much part of the cultural disintegration it claimed to be exposing as an attack on that disintegration. Every fashionable intellectual cliché that one can find appears sooner or later in the novel (i.e., only capitalists profit by wars and their allegiance is strictly to the dollar; sexual abstinence leads to rape and murder; Italians are cowardly soldiers but lovable, crafty, conniving little men; whores have hearts of gold, weep easily, and love their occupation; army nurses and doctors are indifferent to death when they are not out-and-out sadists; the stupidity of colonels is exceeded only by the imbecility of generals). *Catch-22* reduced all existence to the level of caricature.

Nichols's chief problem in making the film was not structural. It was, rather, to endow characters whose sole function in the novel seemed to be the delivery of funny lines—what might be thought of as the elevation of street corner *dozens* into a literary technique—with meaningful existence. That he was defeated in this intention was probably inevitable, but it was certainly not for want of trying. None of the characters in the novel, not even Yossarian, are interesting as people. It is not by accident that the novel still finds its greatest favor among devotees of late-night TV talk shows.

NICHOLS STRUCTURES THE FILM through the decision Yossarian must make: whether to cooperate with Col. Catchcart and gain his release from flying any further missions by making Catchcart a hero in the public eye, or to flee, as did the seemingly witless Orr before him, to the modern pacifist Nirvana, Sweden. This serves a dual purpose. It is an attempt to endow Yossarian with stature as a character; at the same time, it tries to force the viewer into seeing the horror of war. The rather circular structure is held together by repeated glimpses of Snowden's death, the central metaphor to the world of *Catch-22*.

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Alan Arkin's portrayal of Yossarian is sympathetic and even, at moments, moving. Arkin does not play the role for laughs, which would have been easy for him to do. But the price is that the novel's Yossarian is revealed as just so much papier-mâché. His claim on our sympathies ultimately amounts to Heller's having endowed him with a certain moral purity, the result, apparently, of the fact that in a world filled with Minderbinders, Dreedles, and Cathcarts, Yossarian is a nice Armenian boy who wants to live. But the morality is so stagey and Yossarian himself so one-dimensional that the reader grows less and less comfortable with him as the laughs become fewer and fewer, a feeling accentuated by the film where the slapstick has been reduced to a minimum and Yossarian's goodness and purity have all the impact of a girl scout cookie and a glass of milk. Yossarian is a key to Heller's romanticism. And he simply doesn't work, not even when contrasted—as he is at every conceivable opportunity—with Dreedle and Cathcart and Minderbinder, all of them inhumane caricatures created in the name of humanism. (The logic of the film reproduces this. All wars are unjust; all generals are stupid, fat-faced bastards accompanied by big-breasted overly-lipsticked WACs; all young men who fight wars are decent, sexual human beings, doomed to Snowden's fate, their guts spilling out in technicolor.)

From the opening shot of a sublime sunrise ripped apart by the roar of bombers taking off from their hot and dusty base, while the sunrise surrenders to smoke and frightened birds and roaring motors, to destroy nature's harmonious balance (with one eye on Wordsworth's ghost, the other on the ecologists: "War is bad for children and other living things," a proposition with which it is impossible to quarrel), to the conclusion in which Yossarian flees his hospital room to put out to sea in a raft bound for Sweden, the film's romanticism serves as the handmaiden to its shallow morality. And whatever real protest the film could have made against war is dissipated in that romanticism.

The war, like the world in which it is taking place, simply does not register. For this is a world in which evil is generalized to the point of being incidental. In a section devoted to following Yossarian as he walks through Rome's darkened streets, meant to impress us with the Hogarthian bestiality of mankind, policemen flog men in the streets, whores perform fellatio in darkened hallways, drivers beat their horses. But none of it registers, for not only war but all human activity in this film has been made banal through being made general.

Mr. Nichols has come in for a great deal of criticism for *Catch-22*, but this is criticism which seems to me, for the most part, misplaced. He could have, of course, chosen to pursue Heller's slapstick and arrived with a film in which the hollowness was disguised by a series of rapidly exploding sight gags. That he didn't remains to his credit, even if the novel's humor has found no adequate replacement here. He can, of course, be legitimately faulted for such scenes as those in the Roman bordello where the old Italian gigolo preaches his philosophy of staying alive, accompanied by the expected lines about how smart the Italians are for not being able to fight. And one would have supposed that in 1970 a man as intelligent as Nichols would realize that the idea that only capitalists like Milo Minderbinder benefit from war leaves a great deal to be desired, as does the equally silly idea that people who practice sexual abstinence, like the All-American boy Aardvark, wind up rapists and murderers. But here they are, dusted off and presented to us with a kind of pristine innocence.

But what failed in *Catch-22* is not film as a medium but the novel's lack of substance. Nichols's direction may be slow, but it is also uncompromising in the task he set for himself. He succeeds in creating coherence out of an incoherent world, and it is exactly here that he betrays the novel. Heller's novel was improvisational, a kind of literary *spiel* that was, at moments, extremely funny and simply never let up for a page. But if one returned to it, after the jokes were no longer fresh, it was almost impossible to get through. The lack of characterization, the absence of any moral conflict, the wearisome intrusion of an author trying to prove his prowess as a gag man, the tin-foil settings—all made a second reading arduous. The ultimate effect of *Catch-22* brought to life on the screen is to force us to stare at the emperor's nakedness. It is this, rather than Snowden's erupting guts, that is shocking.

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Peter Gourevitch

Anatomy of "Affluent Workers"

THE AFFLUENT WORKER IN THE CLASS STRUCTURE, by John Goldthorpe, David Lockwood, Frank Bechhofer, and Jennifer Platt. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. 239 pp. $7.50; paper, $2.25.

RICHARD NIXON, Edmund Muskie, George Wallace, Harold Wilson, the New Left, the Old Left, Michel Rocard, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, Rudi Dutschke—pretty much everybody dreams about the working class these days, though they dream different dreams. This discord in some ways parallels the continuing battle among writers of various kinds as to the exact composition, aspirations, and political views of the working class. That higher real wages, more consumer goods, more leisure, better housing, greater job complexity, and mass culture have changed the living conditions of the working class in industrialized countries is beyond dispute. That the working-class movement has lost some of its revolutionary and even reformist zeal is also obvious. What remains contentious are propositions that predict the political orientation of workers in the future: have they been absorbed into the system for good or are conditions preparing for a new era of conflict and change?

Arguments about the future are usually also arguments about the origins of the present. And any good analysis of the workers will at the same time have to explore more general questions about the sources of political behavior. This is exactly what a team of British sociologists headed by John Goldthorpe and David Lockwood have done in their excellent book *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure,* the third and final volume reporting on an intensive study of blue- and white-collar workers in the English town of Luton.[1]

Dispute about the working class turns on the extent of connection seen among on-the-job experiences, the pressures of the job market, patterns of living, cultural forces such as status and aspiration, and, finally, politics.[2] What makes *The Affluent Worker* so good and so important is the authors' awareness that these are logically distinct categories whose connections in real life may vary and must be demonstrated for each case. The book is a critique of two strands of argument that draw opposite conclusions from the same conceptual error: excessive determinism.

In the late '50s and early '60s, what the authors label as liberal sociology (Lipset, Bell, Clark Kerr, *et al.*) argued that advanced industrialization is leading to the decline and decompositon of the working class. Economic prosperity means that workers can now consume like everybody else; technology destroys the sharp break in both work experience and market position between those who work with their hands and those who work with their brains; urbanization and suburbanization eliminate sharp contrasts in patterns of residence and social relations. As the working class thus loses its distinctive qualities, it assimilates into the middle class. As a result, the militant cutting edge of its politics gets blunted by the end-of-ideology pulp supposed to be characteristic of our age. Since prosperity, technology, and urbanization are all likely to continue, we

[1] The previous volumes in this series are: *The Affluent Worker: Industrial Attitudes and Behavior* (1968) and *The Affluent Worker: Political Attitudes and Behavior* (1968). Each volume can be read separately though the third makes the full argument most broadly and explicitly. All are in paperback.

[2] In a very fine earlier book, David Lockwood demonstrates the importance of distinguishing among market situation, work situation, and status situation in order to understand changes in the attitudes and behavior of white-collar workers. His book *The Blackcoated Worker* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1958, available in paperback) deserves as much attention as C. Wright Mills's book on the same subject.

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can expect that the working class will settle down to a role in the pragmatic resolution of technical problems, and be happy about it.

An alternative interpretation is put forth by the neo-Marxists: granted that the working class has realized substantial gains in living standards, its political quiescence is not due to the satisfaction of genuine needs. Workers remain alienated because: propaganda stirs up false wants in order to promote ever higher levels of consumption; the job experience is pervaded by authoritarian relationships, which leave the worker estranged from the process and fruits of his own production; the persistence of gross inequalities of income and other resources combined with continued use of the market as an instrument of discipline leave the worker in a precarious situation. The pessimists among the neo-Marxists, notably Marcuse, expect that the masses will never realize they are trapped in this one-dimensional existence and will therefore never do anything about it. Somewhat more optimistic writers, like André Gorz and Serge Mallet, think the system contains elements promoting awareness among workers and creating conditions that will spawn more or less militant collective action: blurring of job distinctions creates a basis for unity among workers and technicians against managers; mass society promotes solidarity by eliminating parochial loyalties; rising expectations induced by affluence may turn into political radicalism if they fail to be satisfied; and complexity makes modern enterprise especially vulnerable to disruption.

As Goldthorpe and Lockwood point out, the liberal and neo-Marxist schools both treat politics as a reflection of "real" forces. Granted that the steel worker with a house and car does not feel so close to the edge as does a miner out of Zola's *Germinal;* granted that the lab technician in a pharmaceutical company does not feel an oppressive barrier between himself and his supervisors. Knowing only that sort of information about a man still does not enable us to predict the content of his politics—whether he will vote Labor, or Tory, or stay home because he thinks there is no difference, or whether he will vote Wallace, Nixon, or Humphrey.

What else do we need to know? First, we have to understand what the changes in his life situation mean to him. This takes us into one of the most critical problems in political sociology: *how powerful are the constraints imposed on behavior by "objective conditions"?* The end points in that argument seem clear enough: ability to perceive reality in different ways is not infinite. In manners, culture, philosophy, politics, sociology, etc., agrarian societies (however they may differ) have something in common distinguishing all of them from any industrialized society. The number of ways of organizing mass production is to some degree limited, though there is disagreement about which aspects of industrialization are critical and how constraints operate—through the dictates of technology, hierarchy, or affluence (to name a few possibilities)? Most arguments about the political consequences of modernization turn on assumptions as to what is a function of industrialization and what is not.

On the other hand, it seems clear enough that reality can be variously perceived. The exigencies of steel production do not make the organization of a Japanese steel factory identical to that of its American counterpart. Fluoridation can be a blow for progress in health or for "the Communist conspiracy." Wealth can be used to equalize incomes, go to the moon, or make wars. The constraints of reality leave some room for choice, and that choice is made by mental processes, individual or collective.

To note that objective reality and perceptions both matter is easy. The difficulty lies in establishing just what role each plays in specific situations. Goldthorpe and Lockwood find that it makes sense to emphasize the leeway reality allows to the play of the mind. Although objective aspects of workers' lives do increasingly resemble those of the middle class, workers are not becoming more middle-class in thought or behavior—at least not yet. They are changing, but in a different direction—toward what the authors call *"instrumental collectivism,"* a family-centeredness that represents "the adaptation of traditional patterns either to the problems posed by new conditions or to new opportunities." Workers remain distinctive in their attitudes toward jobs and employers, in their social lives, and in their aspirations.

The ability to respond to the same thing in different ways emerges quite clearly in the authors' analysis of the world of work. Liberal

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sociologists have assumed that more management sensitivity toward workers would lead to employee integration into the company; radicals have hoped that the workplace would become a basis for the development of solidarity among fellow workers, white-collar personnel, and perhaps even supervisors. In Luton, neither is happening because the workers see their jobs solely as a way of earning enough money to support their outside life styles. Many of them, in order to get higher pay, deliberately gave up jobs they felt contained greater intrinsic satisfactions and moved away from family and friends. Hence they feel little warmth for anything surrounding the work place. Unlike their white-collar counterparts, workers make little use of factory recreation and social facilities, established by directors doubtlessly well-versed in the "human relations" school of management: " 'Even people within easy bus ride don't like coming back to the company. It's their workplace and they don't like it.' " Similarly, white-collar employees desire advancement and promotion, while the members of the blue-collar sample do not: "supervisory jobs implied too great a degree of involvement in, and commitment to, the firm—and particularly in view of the often quite modest economic rewards that they offered."

In living habits, the contrasts are equally sharp. Here the role of income and residence could be cleanly tested because it was easy to find samples of white- and blue-collar employees whose pay and houses (rented or owned, public or private) were identical. Goldthorpe and Lockwood find that the two groups still remain quite distinct: workers are less inclined to entertain friends at home, join voluntary associations, associate with white-collar families even when living next door to them; and they retain their own images of society and the best means of ensuring their children's future in it.

Among those workers who do have middle-class habits and views, a very large proportion turn out to be downwardly mobile persons who once belonged to the middle class. This is important. Like poor workers now affluent, the downwardly mobile bring to their new situations perspectives from the old. If an identical present fails to make the two groups alike, the case for the mediating role of attitudes and perceptions is that much stronger. In this study family origin is one of the most powerful predictors of other responses.

Working with this sort of evidence (of which the above examples are but a tiny part), Goldthorpe and Lockwood are skeptical toward some of the arguments advanced about the alienation of workers. If alienation is taken to mean a home-centered and privatized style of life, concern with consumption, and lack of satisfactions deriving from the intrinsic qualities of work, then "Marx's original characterization of 'alienated labour' can stand as a not greatly exaggerated account of our major conclusions." What the authors question is the attempt to locate the source of these orientations in the nature of work rather than in "whatever social-structural or cultural conditions generate 'consumption-mindness.' "

Goldthorpe and Lockwood wonder, moreover, why a concern for decent houses, cars, vacuum cleaners, and the like should be taken as manifestations of "false needs":

> It would be equally possible to consider the amenities and possessions for which the couples in our sample were striving as representing something like the minimum material basis on which they and their children might be able to develop a more individuated style of life, with a wider range of choices, than has hitherto been possible for the mass of the manual labor force.

Alienation is to some degree a moral judgment about people's feelings. It is a serious judgment —accusing people of self-deception is a serious business—and it therefore demands great care about what is taken as evidence of particular feelings.

WHAT DO THESE ARGUMENTS IMPLY about the politics of the working class? Largely, that they are indeterminate. If objective reality is limited in the extent to which it can shape views about job advancement, social relations, aspirations for children, and the like, it is all the more unable to control the precise way in which people express these views politically. Since the number of choices available to the voter never matches the variety of personal preferences, there is always some simplification at work. Even if voters' perceptions of what candidates stood for were very clear and accurate, people would of necessity have to support the same man for different reasons: we always

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vote for someone about whom there are things we dislike. And our perceptions are often inaccurate. A man's politics is therefore not fully determined by either his life situation or even his preferences. Low-income Poles may attribute their hardships to the activities of Irish Catholics, blacks, the dissolute young, or the managers of the factories in which they work. Despite similarities among the political systems of industrialized countries (parties, bureaucracies, mass participation, and the like), their politics vary. The United States, Sweden, the U.S.S.R., Japan, and the Union of South Africa are all industrialized countries yet they differ in the allocation of wealth among the values of war, space, leisure, equality, growth, civil liberties, health, etc. We should beware, therefore, of political analysis which relies too heavily on some nonpolitical process like modernization, technology, or economic growth to bring either progress or catastrophe.

Arguing circumspectly (perhaps mindful of inevitable accusations of elitism), Goldthorpe and Lockwood stress the importance of leadership in determining the choice among political alternatives. After three straight defeats, the British Labour party decided to shed its radical aura in order to seize the middle ground. Though the Labour party did win two elections in the mid-sixties, Goldthorpe and Lockwood wonder whether the shift to the Right was or remains necessary. Rather than compete with the Conservatives on their definition of what a governing party ought to do—efficiently manage a capitalist economy—Labour could put forth a different conception of the nation's goals. Following this strategy, Labour would try to emphasize the persistent inequalities of British society and to politicize new aspirations and discontents: rising ambition for children, the urban environment, recreation and the kinds of job-related matters the Tories would find it rather hard to champion—routine and boredom, worker participation in direction of factories, and democratization of economic decision-making at plant, community, and national levels. This task might arouse the rank and file and win over the middle by shaping its definition of concerns:

> Thus our conclusion must be that if the working class does in the long term become no more than one stratum within a system of "classless inegalitarianism," offering no basis for or response to radical initiatives, then this situation will not be adequately explained either as an inevitable outcome of the evolution of industrialism or as reflecting the ability of neo-capitalism to contain the consequences of its changing infrastructure by means of mass social-psychological manipulation. It will to some degree be also attributable to the fact that the political leaders of the working class *chose* this future for it.

Radicals are right in blaming Labour's leadership for conservatism, but wrong in relying on the experience of daily life to evoke by itself a radical consciousness. The tension between leadership and spontaneity is doubtless eternal.

In a sense, this conclusion is even more valid for the United States than for Britain. Ethnicity, race, a greater spread in living standards, and sheer size all act to increase the variety of plausible modes of interpreting one's situation and the number of ways to express oneself politically. Nixon, McCarthy, Wallace, Humphrey, and RFK may all be attractive to different aspects of the same man. Fortunately fewer and fewer people interpret support for Wallace in exclusively racial terms. In the sixties, the Democratic party made admirable efforts to help blacks and the very poor, but it did so in a way that made lower-class whites feel neglected and even threatened. Stress on economic issues (employment, taxes, health care, housing, inflation), and the irresponsible greed of corporations in causing pollution and waste may provide the basis for a coalition of workers, ethnics, blacks, and chicanos, and the liberal elements of the middle class—in short, the old Populist dream. Indeed, I find it somewhat puzzling that no prominent politician on the Left has seized upon this strategy as a way, if nothing else, of advancing his own career. If Nixon and Wallace win out, it will not be because of any "laws" about the evolution of industrial societies.

Just why that is so, Goldthorpe and Lockwood do a brilliant job of explaining in *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure*. The book's faults are largely those of omission. Some gaps are beyond the authors' control: it would be important to know, for instance, what changes occur over time, as new generations and conditions emerge, but that sort of knowledge requires longitudinal studies of the same groups over decades. Even so, the authors think those who expect time to bring consider-

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able change have the burden of proof to specify more precisely what they expect to happen and why:

> A factory worker can double his living standards and still remain a man who sells his labour to an employer in return for wages; he can work at a control panel rather than on an assembly line without changing his subordinate position in the organization of production; he can live in his own house in a "middle-class" estate or suburb and still remain little involved in white-collar social worlds. In short, class and status relationships do not change entirely *pari passu* with changes in the economic, technological and ecological infrastructure of social life: they have rather an important degree of autonomy, and can thus accommodate considerable change in this infrastructure without themselves changing in any fundamental way.

Other gaps in the book might have been taken care of more readily: given the importance attributed to leadership, it would be valuable to know something of the history and traditions of Luton's trade unions. Perhaps the book's greatest virtue is that it structures discussion in such a way that everyone winds up arguing about the right issues in the right terms. Wouldn't it be useful if that were true of all the people with whom you discuss the working class?

David Spitz

The End of Marcuse

HERBERT MARCUSE: AN EXPOSITION AND A POLEMIC, by Alasdair MacIntyre. New York: Viking Press. 114 pp. $1.65.

HERBERT MARCUSE COMPELS ATTENTION because he is, or is said to be, one of the more influential social philosophers of our time. Yet every serious critic I have read has concluded that his doctrines are, in almost all essentials, wrong. It would seem, then, that there is no necessary relationship between truth and influence, which, if we are to judge by history, is all too evidently the case. Alternatively, Marcuse's critics may be wrong and his doctrines right. Or his critics may be right and his influence far less than what it is commonly supposed to be. I wish to suggest here that we ought seriously to entertain this last, as well as the first, possibility.

For if by influence we mean the impact a thinker has on the minds of others, not merely on an occasional student (Angela Davis) or friend (Barrington Moore), but on a social movement, an organization, a program, or a school of thought, Marcuse has not to my knowledge had such an impact. The New Left came into being before its members knew of his existence, and it is by no means clear that they have adopted more than bits and pieces of his theories. They have used him as a slogan and symbol, an instrument of their desires. They have drawn from him phrases like "one-dimensional man" and "repressive tolerance." But they have not taken from him, for it is not there to be found, a comprehensive and well-grounded political and social philosophy, or a frame of analysis, or even a methodology by which to enhance their understanding of the world. In this respect Marcuse is totally unlike his avowed mentors Marx and Hegel and Freud, who even to their disciples were deficient in particulars but offered what was clearly more vital, a coherent whole. Marcuse offers instead a pastiche of labels and insights that, because they confirm what the New Left believes, has carried momentary appeal. But an epiphenomenon is not a cause.

What is easier to establish than Marcuse's influence, or lack of it, is the invalidity of almost all his key positions. This is the task Alasdair MacIntyre has set himself in his brief book, and he has executed it superbly. There is no more devastating critique of Marcuse's thought.

MacIntyre traces, with learning and acute perception, Marcuse's readings of Hegel and Marx and Freud, and shows that in every case those readings, by selecting only what is congenial to Marcuse's predilections, distort and misrepresent the doctrines they purport to advance. With respect to Marx, indeed, Marcuse's interpretation more closely resembles the pre-Marxist Left or Young Hegelians whom Marx attacked than it does that of Marx himself or of the post-Marxists. Similarly, Marcuse's critique of contemporary society rests on a fatal oddity, namely, that if his analysis is correct neither he nor his auditors could exist; since they exist—or is Marcuse but another illusion?

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—his analysis cannot stand. From which it also follows that his program of action is unrealistic: a monolithic and submerged people can neither think nor be capable of revolt; those capable of revolt must be outside the one-dimensionality of man, in which case, again, man is no longer, if he ever was, one-dimensional. Here, in fact, Marcuse's simplistic account of causality is most defective, for it overlooks the discontinuities and disharmonies of advanced industrial societies, the role of accident in history, and the impact of political traditions and cultural institutions. Finally, Marcuse's attack on modern philosophy founders because it builds on a thorough misunderstanding of the neutrality of logic and of what the diverse (not single) modern philosophies are and what they seek to do.

TWO CURIOUS CONCLUSIONS emerge. One, of passing interest, is that with respect to practically every one of his major doctrines Marcuse is a derivative and not an original thinker. The other, more crucial, is that Marcuse is a supremely irrational man.

This is a serious charge, and MacIntyre does not make it lightly (or perhaps as directly and strongly as I make it here). Yet it must be made. For what is characteristic of Marcuse's writing is that he "tends to substitute assertion for argument and to offer no reason for believing that what he says is true." Now it is a commonplace (at least from the time of Kant) that we can understand the world only because the mind brings to its task of understanding a set of categories by means of which it organizes what is given in experience. Experience, that is, never comes to us raw; it is always mediated by categories.

Marcuse brings to experience a set of categories that imposes order on experience; but what is peculiar to Marcuse's thought is that it is itself unaffected by that experience. If the facts do not fit his categories, they are ignored. But if to be rational means that one carefully examines all the available evidence, or as much of it as he can manage in a given circumstance, in such a way that it is clear what would be evidence *against* his beliefs, then Marcuse's massive indifference to the empirical data stamps him as an irrational man. If to be rational is to consider alternative positions to one's own and to lay oneself open to criticism and refutation in the light of any possible extreme, then Marcuse by foreclosing on tolerance effectively cuts himself off from such criticism and refutation. If to be rational is to admit the possibility of one's own fallibility, then Marcuse by his dogmatism and certitude, and by his contempt for all who hold positions other than his own, degrades man by deifying himself.

Marcuse has produced a theory that, as MacIntyre correctly says, "invokes the great names of freedom and reason while betraying their substance at every important point."

Murray Hausknecht

Scientist as Victim

THE OPPENHEIMER CASE: SECURITY ON TRIAL, by Philip M. Stern, with the collaboration of Harold P. Green. New York: Harper & Row. 591 pp. $10.

FOR HIS COLLEAGUES and most others who came into contact with him, J. Robert Oppenheimer was a compelling figure; he retains this attraction for those who write about him. Unlike Captain Dreyfus who never emerges as a person from the innumerable accounts of his case, Oppenheimer is always at center stage. Thus Philip M. Stern, who started as a collaborator on a legal analysis of the Oppenheimer affair, became so fascinated with Oppenheimer the man that his work turned into a full-fledged description of the case. Legal scholarship may have suffered a loss, but the resulting book is a gain for the rest of us. *The Oppenheimer Case* is a well written and meticulously researched description of what happened to Oppenheimer; it will remain for some time to come the best single secondary source on the case.

Oppenheimer's life is the stuff out of which myths are made. Even his physical being contributed to the construction of illusions: a tall, spare, ascetic-looking man rarely seen without a pipe in hand, he was the stereotype of the other-worldly intellectual. Nor were looks deceiving. He was an intellectual who had

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a professional mastery of the rarefied field of modern theoretical physics, and who quoted from the Bhagavad-Gita (read in the Sanskrit) as he watched the world's first mushroom cloud form. He was one of a small group of men who had laid the basis for modern physics in the United States and so made possible the work at Los Alamos. He was also an intellectual who could be relied upon to perform the practical tasks of this world; his contribution at Los Alamos was a vital factor in the success achieved there. Oppenheimer could have justly claimed what André Malraux said should have been his response to his enemies, *"Je suis la bombe atomique!"*

Simple, unshadowed heroes are boring, and part of Oppenheimer's fascination is that there were other sides to his character. The man who could inspire enormous respect in colleagues and students was also arrogant; he could allow himself to be publicly malicious about those whose abilities he held in contempt. For all his intellectual brilliance as a physicist Oppenheimer did not exhibit any greater political sophistication during the thirties than many other, less gifted Americans. Like them he was attracted by the ideology of the Popular Front and causes sponsored by the Communist party. For those inhabiting the strange world of the security system during and after the war, these were sinister facts made even more sinister by the further fact that both his brother and his wife's first husband had been Party members. These dark suspicions were later reinforced by the famous Chevalier incident, which Oppenheimer did not report when it occurred and about which he later told conflicting stories. For security personnel this was entirely too interesting a life, and it made them uneasy.

He was also an unresolved contradiction to the logic of the security system. One of its presumptions is that the degree of "risk" men represent can be determined by a close examination of their lives, particularly their "associations" and politics. But the closer an examination of a life the greater the ambiguity: although J. Edgar Hoover is a devout and God-fearing man, he is also a bachelor who likes to go to the races. Such ambiguities are resolved by assuming that some facts are more meaningful than others, and so Oppenheimer's "associations" weighed heavily on the minds of security officers. Even during the war, as work at Los Alamos was progressing, there were recommendations that he be dismissed. Similar recommendations were acted upon in regard to other scientists with predictable consequences for their lives and careers. But these recommendations were ignored in Oppenheimer's case—if one seriously wanted an atomic bomb, then Oppenheimer had to be regarded as indispensable. The reality of the war overcame the reality of the security system. At the end of the war and for nearly ten years afterwards, Oppenheimer was an anomaly, a major "security risk" who was privy to secrets of the brave new atomic world. For people mad for "security" he was a very provoking figure.

BY 1954 OPPENHEIMER was a prestigeful and influential figure within the scientific community and the counsels of government. As the leading scientific adviser to the Atomic Energy Commission he was automatically part of an interlocking advisory system in the government; his voice could easily be heard and it car-

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ried great weight. This meant that he also made enemies, especially among the military and their supporters, for his opposition to the H-Bomb and his support of a project which threatened the position of the Strategic Air Command. He also made other enemies, like Lewis Strauss, then chairman of the AEC. Stern stresses the personal animosity Strauss bore Oppenheimer because the latter made him appear a fool before a Congressional committee. While this animus helped in the attack that was launched on Oppenheimer, it is clear that even without Strauss's intervention Oppenheimer was vulnerable.

For one thing, he had ceased to be indispensable; his opposition to the H-Bomb did not prevent Edward Teller and others from working out a practical method of making the weapon. At the same time his anomalous position with respect to "loyalty-security" made him a tempting and profitable target for Joe McCarthy. Surprising is that Oppenheimer had remained immune from such attention for so long a time. Although his "associations" were known to many renowned investigators, he was treated with kid gloves; indeed, some, like Richard Nixon, testified to his character and Americanism. It has been suggested that his immunity from McCarthy was the result of an agreement between the Administration and the Senator—McCarthy was to leave Oppenheimer alone and the Administration would take care of him.

More probably there was a fear that Oppenheimer's immunity could not last and that eventually someone would attempt to hunt him down. This, combined with pressure from those who saw him as an obstacle to their own ends, decided the issue for the Administration. To withstand their own fears and the pressures would have taken a quality of character lacking in the morally flabby Eisenhower administration.

And so Oppenheimer was forced to defend himself and his life in hearings before the Gray Board. Though conducted with a veneer of decorum and gentlemanliness absent from the circuses held by Congressional committees, these hearings, Stern's excellent recounting shows, were a classic instance of the perversion of justice and the elementary rules of decency. Even before the hearings began, Oppenheimer's conversations with his lawyers were bugged; Lloyd K. Garrison, a lawyer of impeccable reputation, was not given a security clearance and therefore had to leave the room, so that his client was without counsel when classified information was introduced; and his attorneys were denied access to information favorable to Oppenheimer. But it did not end there; the findings and recommendations of the Gray Board came to the Commissioners of the AEC for a final decision. Two glimpses of the decisions are enough to suggest the quality of the men who were Oppenheimer's judges. Strauss found that Oppenheimer was "not entitled to the continued confidence of the government . . . because of the proof of fundamental defects of his 'character.' " This was an odd reason, since the original charges had not mentioned "defects of character" and the hearing had not addressed itself to that issue. The Gray Board had stated that no one could question Oppenheimer's "loyalty and love of country." However, another commissioner, Thomas E. Murray, *did* find that Oppenheimer was "disloyal" and had little difficulty in dealing with the complexities of the meaning of loyalty. An employee of the government is subject to the security system, and "the measure of his obedience to [its] requirements is the decisive measure of his loyalty to his lawful Government. No lesser test will settle the question of his loyalty." The system demands that a man restrict his associations; Oppenheimer did not abide by these restrictions, therefore he is "disloyal."

What is ultimately discouraging about this wretched case is that there is little indication that the security system and the view of the world it fosters have changed much. Recent court decisions, it is true, have improved procedural safeguards. But as one listens to Spiro Agnew and John Mitchell it is clear that their notions about loyalty cannot be much different from those of Thomas E. Murray. The Oppenheimer affair is now history, but it finds its daily echo in the pronouncements from Washington.

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LETTERS

Views on Israel

Editor:

DISSENT has recently carried three contributions dealing with Israel. Two, by Irving Howe and Michael Walzer, give critical support to the Israeli government; a third, by the Jerusalem professor J. L. Talmon, is a moving appeal to reason and reconciliation, implicitly critical not only of the Israeli government but of the attitudes which most Israelis display vis-à-vis their Arab neighbors and the prospects of peaceful coexistence with them. However, if Professor Talmon's article was meant to balance the one-sided views of Irving Howe and Michael Walzer, it does so only in the very narrow sense in which Walzer reports (with an audible sigh of relief) that "the distances are small between so-called doves and hawks. . . . there are virtually no disagreements about the requirements of a final settlement, nor about the need for military strength. . . ."

As though to confirm this statement, Professor Talmon, speaking as a so-called dove, spells out his conditions for peace: "Unity for Jerusalem (with some autonomous status for the Arab community in it); the Golan Heights. . . . strongpoints such as Sharm-el-Sheik; demilitarization of Sinai and the West Bank; a U.N. force under auspices of the Security Council; freedom of passage through the straits." This is the government's minimum program; Professor Talmon's only distinction is that he announces it now, instead of holding on to other points for bargaining purposes. The first three of his six points are unacceptable to the Arabs.

Paradoxically, Professor Talmon, an Israeli, starts out from a less pro-Zionist attitude than Howe and Walzer; but their conclusions are not so far apart. The spectrum of opinions in Israel, however, is not as narrow as we are told. Walzer himself admits that a substantial percentage of Arabs and a minority of Jews favor a binational state. But contrary to his assertion, they include not only the extreme Right among Jews but also the extreme Left and a number of independent humanists such as the late Professor Magnes, as well as eminent friends of Israel such as Erich Fromm and Hannah Arendt. Moreover, there is now a growing opposition to the government's policies among the young in Israel, and the continued stalemate of the Cold War in the Near East has caused many to reflect on the character of the State of Israel. While this New Left does not appear to doubt that the State of Israel should continue to exist in some form, the events of the last three years have opened the question whether it can exist in its present form.

We note with deep regret that our two co-editors have not felt it necessary to write about the refugee problem which Professor Talmon calls the central issue—though he does not offer any solution either. While we agree that this question is one of the knottiest in today's international affairs, we suggest the following measures:

1. UNRRA should be dissolved and American contributions should be stopped; responsibility for maintaining those camps which they wish to continue should devolve clearly on the Arab states. On the other hand, Israel's accommodation of Jewish refugees from Arab lands must be recognized as a balancing claim. Refugees who have found employment outside the camps should lose the status of refugees. So should camp inmates who cannot prove that they either were forced to flee from the present territory of Israel or are descended from such persons.
2. Bona fide refugees should be offered the triple choice of (a) returning to their place of birth, with full rights of ownership and citizenship; (b) accepting compensation and renouncing all rights to return; (c) accepting neither return nor compensation while safeguarding their rights.

While such an offer, if made by Israel, would not be without risks (but what in politics is without risks?) and its implementation ought to be surrounded by certain safeguards, it is essential that Israel make the gesture, just as it is essential for Israel to offer the return to its original borders. Without such a gesture, Irving Howe's plea for the defense of Israel's democracy falls flat. One can agree with him that Israel must be defended against aggression; but one cannot accept the plea that Israel's aggression must be condoned because it is a democracy.

He states correctly that the analogy between Israel and Vietnam is false; it is indeed false for many reasons which he does not state. But the analogy holds true in one respect: collective security must not be tampered with by any nation, and the community of nations must not allow any nation to violate another nation's borders. One can agree that Israel had more provocation to attack Egypt than the U.S. had to attack North Vietnam—but these provocations can hardly serve as an excuse to annex parts of the Kingdom of Jordan or to strike commando blows in the territory of Lebanon. Or in other words: if Irving Howe is right in differentiating between U.S. actions in Vietnam and Israeli actions in the Near East, he may also have to differentiate between actions of the Israeli government which are defensible and others which are not.

In writing about Near East affairs, or indeed about Third World affairs, one risks bad company these days. Nothing in this letter should be construed as support to Arab nationalism, Fadeyeen or other terrorist organizations and their perverse hangers-on among the New Left in America, the Matzpen and other self-lacerating Jews. But the murder of six million Jews by Hitler has not given their survivors any right to drive out a million Arabs from Palestine, and the iniquities Jews in the Middle East have suffered at the hands of Arab governments do not justify the aggrandizement of the State of Israel. Prominent Israelis, including the Mayor of Jerusalem, have stated that it is not

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necessary for Israel to own Jerusalem; but it is necessary for socialists to disown annexationists. It is regrettable that the line has not been drawn sharply enough between those who plead for justice in the Near East and those who are swayed by the rhetoric of national survival.

JOSEPH BUTTINGER and HENRY PACHTER ■

Panthers and the Left

Editor:

Irving Howe reprints a classically anti-Semitic article from the Black Panther newspaper, written by Connie Matthews. He thus scores one point in his continuing debate over the Panthers with their New Left supporters.

But why is it that the only thing DISSENT has to say about the Panthers in two horribly eventful months is that they printed an anti-Semitic article in their paper? Certainly Irving Howe agrees that there has been a national conspiracy to eliminate the Panthers, presided over by the attorney general and the FBI director; that, because of their political ideas, the Panther leadership has been systematically decimated by this national conspiracy, leaving people like Connie Matthews the only ones left; that, in the last two months, the mistreatment in jail of the New York and New Haven Panthers, and the harassment of their lawyers, suggests that they can't get a fair trial; that charges should have been brought against the officials responsible for the police murders of Chicago Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark; that the reversal of Huey Newton's conviction was long overdue, and that refusing him bail was an intolerable injustice; that Bobby Seale should not be charged with conspiracy in Chicago, and should not be tried before Judge Hoffman, who previously denied him his right to an attorney and his right to defend himself.

Why, with all this to be argued, is Irving Howe satisfied to document one case of Panther anti-Semitism? A more appropriate sentiment for one who proclaims himself to be some sort of socialist would be "where any man is oppressed, I am oppressed." If Howe doesn't feel that way, at least he ought to be able to appreciate the tactical wisdom of "first they came for the Catholics, but I didn't protest, because I wasn't a Catholic."

The political repression of the Panthers—which may indeed be "fascist repression"—is too serious a matter for the left for Irving Howe to be satisfied with scoring points against their defenders.

JON WIENER

IRVING HOWE *replies:*

In view of Mr. Wiener's courtesy of tone and the likelihood that his views represent a strand of left-wing opinion, I should like to reply in some detail.

(1) The item that troubles Mr. Wiener occupied half a page in the July–August 1970 DISSENT; most of it was a quote from *The Black Panther,* a quote Mr. Wiener describes as "classically anti-Semitic." The rest consisted of a few lines of comment by myself. That was all we had to say about the Panthers in *that* issue. But if Mr. Wiener will stretch his historical reach by just a few months, he will find in our March–April 1970 issue a remarkable article—so, at least, I regard it in its mixture of sympathy and criticism—entitled "Panthers: Black Men in Extremis" and written by Jervis Anderson, a very gifted young black writer. There Mr. Wiener will find the judgments he asks for, and I agree with, concerning police attacks on the Panthers:

> In addition to the immediate principle of the Panthers' rights, a broader urgency underlies this concern [with police methods] because if it becomes a relatively easy matter to by-pass the "due process sieve" in dealing with the Panthers, then it becomes just as easy to do so in respect, say, to the whole black community in America, which occupies a position in relationship to the police whim and power that *ultimately* is not any more advantageous than that occupied by the Panthers.

Surely, that ought to satisfy Mr. Wiener as to where we stand. (He also may find Mr. Anderson's article in the present issue of interest.)

(2) It would be foolish, I think, to ask that a magazine like DISSENT feel obliged to react every two months to each outrage with which our world is filled. We would then have no space for anything else, certainly not for reflection on how a politics to end such outrages can be created.

(3) If my comment on Connie Matthews' "classically anti-Semitic article" had done no more than score a point, it would have been—pointless. Far more than a debate is involved here. That there are foolish or benighted persons in the Panther movement is no more significant than that there are such persons in other movements. What *is* significant is that such "a classically anti-Semitic article" can appear in the Panther press without retraction in a later issue or public protest from the white left-wing intellectuals who sympathize with the Panthers. And still more significant is the fact that one can detect and document—does Mr. Wiener wish to challenge me on this?—a *trend* toward anti-Semitism in the Panthers. Sometimes it is feebly disguised (as it used to be in traditional anti-Semitic groups) with such terminology as "anti-Zionism" or as "anti-Kosher nationalism."

Will Mr. Wiener and others of his political outlook consider the implications of such a trend? Will they ask themselves how it relates to and perhaps even calls into question their political sympathies for the Panthers?

(4) A distinction is called for. I support the defense of the Panthers' civil rights; I am not in sympathy with many of their ideas. What is more, I cannot honestly say in advance—as one could have about other groups—that each time the Panthers get involved in a fight with the police, they are necessarily to be regarded as innocent

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victims. The Panther policy of police-baiting, their advocacy and apparent use of violence, make it difficult in some instances to distinguish between violations of rights and mere shoot-outs, between cases where the Panthers should be vigorously defended and cases where one finds it hard to know. In some cities there have clearly been instances, though it is not at all clear who organized them, where the police have been lured to their death. This seems to me no more defensible morally and politically than what the Chicago police did to Fred Hampton. Let me quote Jervis Anderson again:

> . . . considering the color of the Panthers, considering the nature of their political mission, the irrevence of their stance, their policy toward the police, and the terminologies in which they couch their hatred and contempt for the police, it is hard to imagine anyone—including the Panthers themselves—being surprised at the way the police have behaved. . . . Obviously, this is not to applaud the police. It is merely to say that those Panthers who are now frantically calling the country's attention to what the police are doing to them must be far more naive than the apparent nature of their enterprise in America led one to believe.

(5) There is a great deal in the Panther outlook, politics, and methods that must be repugnant to democrats and socialists. Their celebration of Maoism, their recent relationship with the American Stalinists, their glorification of violence, their arm-twisting methods within the black community, their fanatical enmity to Israel (the *New York Times,* August 23, reports a Panther delegation in Amman declaring support for the guerrillas' refusal to abide by the Middle East cease-fire and urging that "the Zionist entity be removed," a euphemism for the destruction of Israel)—these do not persuade me to regard the Panthers as comrades. One may be convinced that Bobby Seale isn't guilty as charged in the New Haven trial, but the revelations emerging in that trial from the Panthers themselves as to the nature of their inner life ought to be profoundly disturbing to those leftist students who have romanticized the Panthers. The picture the Panther witnesses drew of what happened before Alex Rackley was murdered is that of a milieu of strong-arm authoritarianism.

It would be foolish to deny that the Panthers are an important phenomenon, or that some of their leading figures are strikingly articulate and forceful, or that they release authentic sentiments of black despair. But together with this side there is another one, authoritarian and perhaps even semi-fascist in character. To the latter, their repeated anti-Semitic statements can't, after all, be entirely unrelated. Especially the kind of anti-Semitic statement Mr. Wiener tells us is "classical." ■

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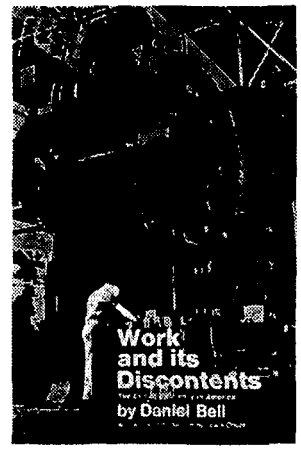

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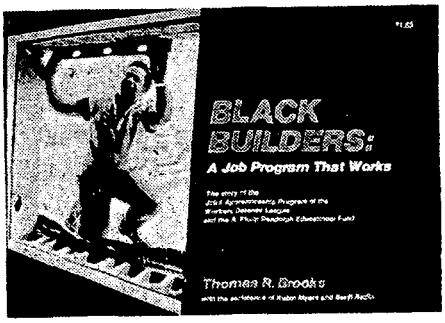

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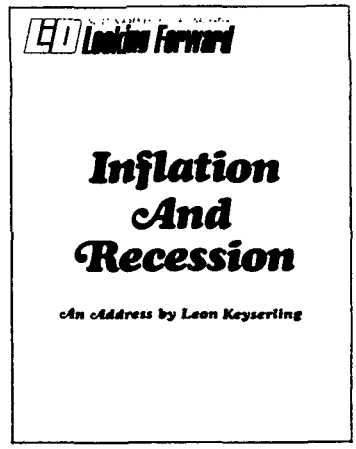

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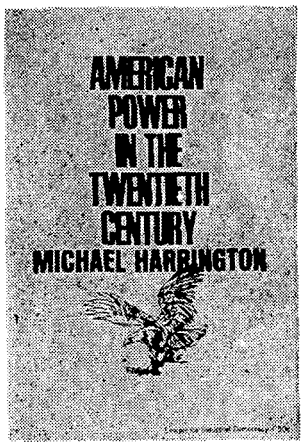

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